
Chas. D. Roberts,
September 24th 1815

Received of Dr. [unclear] a
more valuable help to devotion.
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A
COMPANION
FOR THE
Feastivals and Fasts
OF THE
Church of *England* :
WITH
Collects and Prayers
For each SOLEMNITY.

The Third Edition.

The Righteous shall be in everlasting Remembrance,
Psal. 112. 6.

*Seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of
Witnesses, let us lay aside every Weight, and the Sin
which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with Pa-
tience the Race that is set before us, Heb. 12. 1.*

*Deo beneficiorum ejus, solemnitatibus festis, & die-
bus statutis dicamus, sacramusque memoriam;
ne volumine temporum ingrata subrepat oblivio.*

S. August. de Civit. Dei, lib. 10. c. 4.

*Grandis Labor, sed grande Præmium, esse quod
Martyres, esse quod Apostoli, esse quod Christus
est.*

S. Hierom. ad Eustoch. de cust. Virg.

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THE PREFACE.

I Think my self so far obliged, by that Respect that is usually paid to the candid and charitable Reader, as to acquaint him, before he engages, with what he may expect from the following Treatise: The Design whereof is an Attempt to rescue the Festivals and Fasts of the Church of England, not only from the Prejudices of those who have not yet reconciled themselves to Her Constitution; but chiefly from the Contempt and Neglect of such as profess themselves Her obedient Members, who own Her Authority in indifferent things, and who upon all Occasions, praise and extol the Piety and Usefulness of such Institutions. And farther, humbly to
A 3 offer

offer such Aid and Assistance to well-disposed Minds, that they may be enabled to improve all these Holy Seasons, to the Advantage of their Immortal Souls, and to the securing that Eternal Rest that remains to the People of God.

In order to this purpose, I have, in the Preliminary Instructions, endeavoured to clear the Observation of the Festivals and Fasts from those Objections they were most exposed to; and have made it my Business to set them in such a Light, as might best discover their Beauty and Excellency. And indeed, except we will acknowledge some Power in the Church, to determine the Modes and Circumstances of publick Worship, and to oblige us in indifferent Matters, it is impossible there should be any settled frame of things in any Christian Society in the World. The Rule that is laid down by St. Paul, for the Conduct

duct of all Christian Churches, is, that all things be done decently^{I Cor. 14.} and in order; which, as it supposes^{40.} a Power in our Governors to determine these decent things, and to prescribe the necessary Order, and is moreover a Measure for them to proceed by in establishing their Injunctions; so it must necessarily imply an Obligation in us that are governed to submit to such Determinations, and to obey such Regulations; not from any binding Power in the Nature of those things that are enjoined, but by Virtue of that Obedience we owe to lawful Authority, which is so plainly and positively enforced upon us in the Holy Scriptures. For those things that the Laws of God have not made necessary Duties by being commanded, or Transgressions by being forbidden, are indifferent in their own Nature, and may be determined either way by lawful Authority; and those that are

Subjects ought to yield Obedience to such Determinations, because they are commanded to obey those that have
Heb. 13. 17. *the rule over them, and to submit themselves.*

Thus it is the Duty of all Christians, to humble themselves before God with Fasting and Prayer: Frequently to admire and adore the infinite Wisdom and Goodness of God in the Mysteries of our Redemption: Thankfully to acknowledge those Advantages we have received from the Labours of the Apostles, who by miraculous Gifts and Graces were fitted to convert the World. But as to the certain Seasons when these Duties are publicly to be performed, and as to the way and manner of discharging them, that must be left to the Determinations of our lawful Governors; for what we are obliged to perform at some times, cannot be less a Duty when lawful Authority enjoins a certain time for the performing
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ing it. And if we consider that the Foreign Churches have preserved in their Communion several Festivals, and that the Remains of Christianity, which still subsist in the Greek Church, are very much owing to the solemn Observation of their Feasts and Fasts, there is less reason we should refuse Obedience to such Institutions as are owned by the Protestant Churches abroad, and have had so good an Effect in a Church otherways over-run with Ignorance under the Oppression of Infidels.

Conf. Boh.
Artic. 17.
August.
P. 34.
Helvet.
C. 24.
Ricant.
State of
Greek
Church.
P. 15.

As for those who profess these Principles, they ought to attend to the true Consequences of them ; which would oblige them to pay that regard to Days set apart by the Church for Holy Uses: As to frequent the Publick Assemblies, and to join in all the Acts of Publick Worship ; and to make them serviceable to those Ends for which they were instituted. 'Tis highly

Can. 13.

ly probable, from All Sundays in the Year being placed at the Head of the Festivals, that it was the Intention of those that compiled the Liturgy, that they should all be observed after the same manner, not only with Prayers and Thanksgivings, but with Rest from ordinary Labour. And this I think farther appears from the Words of the Thirteenth Canon, wherein all manner of Persons within the Church of England, are enjoined to keep the Lord's Day, commonly called Sunday, and other Holy-days, according to God's Holy Will and Pleasure; and the Orders of the Church of England prescribed in that behalf: That is, in hearing the Word of God read and taught, in private and publick Prayers, in acknowledging their Offences to God, and amendment of the same, in reconciling themselves charitably to their Neighbours, where Displeasure

sure hath been, in oftentimes receiving the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, in visiting the Poor and Sick, using all godly and sober Conversation. *And that the People might not neglect their Duty in this particular,* Every Parson, Can. 64. Vicar, or Curate, is obliged to give notice every Sunday, whether there be any Holy-days or Fasting-days the Week following; and if he shall wittingly offend, being once admonished thereof by his Ordinary, he is to be censured according to Law, until he submit himself to the due performance of it. *Yet Custom, which in time comes to be a Law, or the Interpreter of it, has made this Rest from ordinary Labour upon all Festivals impracticable; so that the best People content themselves only with more solemn Devotions on most of the Holy-days, and think they satisfy their Obligations at*
such

such times by seriously attending the Divine Service, and joining in all the Acts of publick Worship; it not being evident that more is expected by our Governors.

But thus much we certainly owe, not only to the Justice of our Principles, but out of respect to those that are not Friends to the Constitution of the Church; for how can we suppose they will be prevailed upon to observe Days, when we pay no regard to them our selves; or if when we distinguish them from other Days, it is only by our Vanities and Follies, by our Excess and Intemperance, by dedicating them to Pleasure and Diversion, when Piety and Devotion, the great End and Design of their Institution, is so much neglected.

Upon this Occasion, I think it a great piece of Justice to acknowledge and commend the Pious and Devout Practices of the Religious Societies,
who

who in this point, as well as in many others, distinguish themselves by their regular Conformity and Obedience to the Laws of the Church; for they constantly attend the publick Assemblies upon such holy Seasons. And till they can communicate regularly in their own Parish Churches upon such Days, they embrace those Opportunities that are provided, there being two Churches in London employed for that purpose; where they as duly receive the Blessed Sacrament upon all Festivals as they perform all the other Acts of publick Worship. How they spend the Vigils, in preparing their Minds for a due Celebration of the ensuing Solemnity, is more private, but not less commendable. And the great Care they take to suppress the Dawnings of Enthusiasm, and to discountenance the first Appearances of any vicious Practices amongst their Members, and the methods they impose before Delinquents

St. Mary le
Bow, and
St. Dun-
stan's in
the West.

quents, are entirely reconciled or totally rejected, is such a Preparation of the Minds of the Laity for the reception of that Discipline that is wanted in the Church, that if ever we are blessed with what good Men wish for, and bad Men fear, these Religious Societies will be very instrumental in introducing it, by that happy Regulation that prevails among them. And while they pay that Deference they profess to their Parochial Ministers, and are ready to be governed by their Directions, and are willing to submit their Rules and Orders to the Judgment of the reverend Clergy; I cannot apprehend but that they must be very serviceable to the Interest of Religion, and may contribute very much to revive that true Spirit of Christianity, which was so much the Glory of the Primitive Times. And I see no reason why Men may not meet and consult together, to improve one another

View of
Religious
Societies,
Ord. 3.

another in Christian Knowledge, and by mutual Advice take measures how best to farther their own Salvation, as well as promote that of their Neighbours; when the same Liberty is taken for the Improvement of Trade, and for carrying on the Pleasures and Diversions of Life. And if at such Meetings they shall voluntarily subscribe any certain Sums to be disposed of in such Charities as shall seem most proper to the Majority of their Members, I cannot imagine how this can deserve Censure, when the liberal Contributions of Gentlemen to support a Horse Race or a Musick Meeting, have never been taxed with the least Illegality.

And as for those Objections which are urged against these Societies from some Canons of the Church; they Can. 12. 73. *seem to be founded upon a misunderstanding of the Sense of those Canons; the first whereof was designed against*
the

the pernicious Opinions of the Anabaptists, and the latter only against such Meetings and Consultations, as tended to the impeaching or depraving of the Doctrine of the Church of England, or of the Book of Common Prayer, or any part of the Government and Discipline now establish'd in the Church of England; neither of which Consequences can justly be charged upon a Body of Men, who make it a chief Qualification in the electing their Members, that they be such as own and manifest themselves to be of the Church of England, and frequent the publick holy Exercises of the same.

View of
Religious
Societies,
Ord. 2.

I have for the sake of those, who not only own the Principles of the Church, but are resolved to give the best Proof of it by their regular Conformity to the Laws of that Society whereof they are Members, endeavour'd to give some short Account of each Festival

Festival and Fast, and have offered such Heads of Meditation, as may, if thoroughly digested, contribute to their Improvement in most of the Virtues of a Christian Life.

They that are acquainted with Ecclesiastical History, know what imperfect Sketches we have of many of the blessed Apostles, and that we are left to guess at their indefatigable Labours by the happy Effects of them. Christianity having by their means been diffused in the space of about thirty Years after our Saviour's Death, not only thro' the greatest part of the Roman Empire, but having extended it self as far as Parthia and India. All the Sacred Remains of that kind are collected with so much Learning and Judgment by my worthy Friend Dr. Cave, that whatever I have advanced upon their Festivals, without quotations, may be found in his Lives of the Apostles, from whence I have ta-

ken the liberty to borrow what I thought might contribute towards the perfecting my Design ; the Criticisms of their History, which are omitted, are more proper to entertain the Curiosity of the Learned, than the Devotion of well-disposed Minds.

And indeed, what Arguments can prevail upon Men to engage them to keep a Conscience void of Offence, that may not be deduced from the frequent Meditation of the Mysteries of our Redemption? What means so proper to perfect our Natures, as to set before our selves the Examples of the Primitive Saints, who excelled in the truest Wisdom? It is the unhappy method of the World to form Christian Heroes upon Pagan Models, which should make it no wonder that so few Christian Princes distinguish themselves by what is properly their Glory; but if we design to attain that Happiness the blessed Saints now enjoy, we

must

must tread in their Steps ; and to acquire true Firmness and Resolution of Mind, we must propound for our Imitation the Examples and Patterns of those Holy Men gone before us, who in their respective Ages have given remarkable Testimonies of their Faith in God, and constant Adherence to his Truth.

Among those crying Abominations, which like a Torrent have overspread the Nation, this Age seems to distinguish it self by a great Contempt of the Clergy, than which I think nothing can be a greater Evidence of the decayed State of Religion among us. This barbarous and unchristian Practice, setting all particular Reasons aside, can be resolved into nothing so surely, as into that great Loosness of Principles, and Corruption of Morals, which have too much infected all Ranks and Orders of Men ; for tho' it may pass for a current Maxim a-

mong some, that Priests of all Religions are the same; yet I am of the Opinion, 'twill appear a much truer Observation by Experience, That they of all Religions that condemn the Priesthood, will be found the same, both as to their Principles and Practices; sceptical in the one, and dissolute in the other. To remedy, if possible, this great Evil, I have endeavour'd upon the Ember Fast to explain the Nature of the several Offices in the sacred Function, to shew the Authority of their Commission, the Dignity of the Priesthood, and those Duties the Laity owe to their spiritual Superiors. If these Subjects make any Impression upon Mens Minds, as they will most certainly if calmly and seriously considered, 'twill startle the boldest Sinner to find that in condemning this Order of Men he affronts his Maker; and in despising the Ministers of the Gospel, he despises him that sent them.

If

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If ever a Convocation should think fit to revise the Catechism of the Church, to whose Authority and Judgment an Affair of that Nature ought to be entirely submitted; it is possible they may find it necessary to add some Questions concerning those who have the Power of administering Sacraments, and how they receive such an Authority, and what Duties are owing by God's Word to our spiritual Guides. Because such sort of Instructions early instilled into tender Minds, might in the next Generation retrieve that respect to the Sacred Order which we so scandalously want in this; and they would have this farther Advantage, that they would be a means of keeping Men stedfast to the Communion of the Church, and of preserving them from falling into Schisms, even in a state of Persecution; from the Possibility of which, no humane Establishment can secure

the Church of God, while she is Militant here upon Earth. And 'till this can be effected, it is to be wished the Reverend Clergy would more frequently instruct the People in such Duties; the want of which necessary Knowledge makes the Principles of Church Communion so little understood, that Men are tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the flight of Men, and cunning Craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive. I am very sensible great Modesty has prevailed upon them to divert their Thoughts from this Subject, lest it should be interpreted a preaching up themselves; but the same Fears may as well prevent Parents from instructing their Children, and Masters their Servants, in those Duties that relate to themselves; and since the reason does not hold good in the one Case, it cannot be thought conclusive in the other.

other. And if after all, People will misinterpret the Discharge of their Duty, tho' never so necessary, I hope they will think fit with St. Paul to approve themselves the Ministers of ^{2 Cor. 6.8.} *God, by evil Report as well as good Report, as Deceivers and yet true, rather than neglect what may have so great an Influence upon the Welfare of those Souls committed to their Charge. And I dare undertake for those whose Modesty, as before observed, too often withholds them from magnifying their Office as they justly might; that they would not only be content but very much rejoice to assist in all spiritual Affairs such as shall make Application to them on those Accounts; and take it for a great Comfort and Encouragement to their Labours if they could find their Parishioners ready upon all Occasions to consult them in the Concerns of their Souls, either for the Instruction of*
a 4 *their*

their Ignorance, for the Resolution of their Doubts, for Direction in order to the avoiding or withstanding Temptations, for their Consolation under Trials and Afflictions, or for the best Method of obtaining Pardon of their Sins, and quieting their Consciences.

I have long thought a Design of this Nature might be serviceable to the Interest of Religion, and might contribute something to revive the Piety and Devotion of the Primitive Times; to which I wish we were as conformable in our Practices, as I am well satisfied we are in our Doctrines. 'Tis for this reason I have ventured to make this Essay, not knowing how better to employ that Leisure and Command of Time which the good Providence of God has entrusted me with, than by consecrating it to this Service; depending upon the same good Providence that suggested the Thought, to enable and support me in the Execution

tion of it. And I hope a Lay-man may be allowed at least to express his Desire to see Religion flourish, when so many in the same Rank make bold Attempts, in those vile and wicked Pamphlets that daily abound among us, to undermine the Christian Priesthood, and to ridicule the Mysteries of our Redemption. The mischievous Consequences wherof the State as well as the Church may feel, if not timely prevented.

I am not much concerned for those just Censures the World may fix upon the Meanness of this Performance; the Design of it will, with good People, atone for many Imperfections: Besides, a Man of moderate Attainments may be serviceable to those that have lesser Degrees of Knowledge, and to such who, tho' they may have Capacity, yet have not Leisure nicely to enquire into these Matters. And provided I can but in the least manner

ner promote a Sense of Religion among those that want it, or contribute to the Increase of it where it is already entertained, I shall be much better pleased than to deserve the Praises of the most accomplished Critick.

Upon this Account I have chose to throw the whole Subject of these Papers into a catechetical Form; hoping thereby they may become more universally instructive; for many can judge of the Force of an Answer, who are very much puzzled to follow Reason thro' a Chain of Consequences.

And if there be any such Readers as shall be prevailed upon by my weak Endeavours to become more careful and solicitous about the one thing necessary; and shall be persuaded or enabled to improve the Holy Seasons of the Church to the Advantage of their Souls; let God's Holy Name have the Glory, who was pleased to bless the meanest Instrument in so great a Work.

Work. *Let me only beg the Favour of their Prayers, that when upon such Occasions they prostrate themselves at the Throne of Grace, and approach the Holy Altars of God, they would in the Fervour of their Devotions offer up a Petition for the unworthy Author; that among all the Changes and Chances of this mortal Life, his Heart may surely there be fixed where true Joys are to be found; and that while he is solicitous about the Salvation of others, he may not fall short in securing his own.*

All-Saints, 1703.
Ormond-Street.

ROB. NELSON.

Rules.

*Rules to know when the Moveable
Feasts and Holy-Days begin.*

E *After-Day*, on which the rest depend, is
always the first *Sunday* after the first Full
Moon which happens next after the *One* and
Twentieth Day of *March*. And if the Full
Moon happens upon a *Sunday*, *Easter-Day* is
the *Sunday* after.

Advent-Sunday is always the nearest *Sunday* to
the Feast of *St. Andrew*, whether before or
after.

<i>Rogation-Sunday</i>	} is {	<i>Five Weeks</i>	} after <i>Easter</i> .
<i>Ascension-Day</i>		<i>Forty Days</i>	
<i>Whitsunday</i>		<i>Seven Weeks</i>	
<i>Trinity-Sunday</i>		<i>Eight Weeks</i>	



ATa-

*A Table of all the Feasts that are to
be observed in the Church of Eng-
land through the Year.*

All Sundays in the Year.

The Days of the Feasts of

The Circumcision of our Lord Jesus Christ.
The Epiphany.
The Conversion of *S. Paul*.
The Purification of the Blessed Virgin.
S. Matthias the Apostle.
The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin.
S. Mark the Evangelist.
S. Philip and *S. Jacob* the Apostles.
The Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ.
S. Barnabas.
The Nativity of *S. John Baptist*.
S. Peter the Apostle.
S. James the Apostle.
S. Bartholomew the Apostle.
S. Matthew the Apostle.
S. Michael, and all Angels.
S. Luke the Evangelist.
S. Simon and *S. Jude* the Apostles.
All Saints.
S. Andrew the Apostle.
S. Thomas the Apostle.
The Nativity of our Lord.
S. Stephen the Martyr.
S. John the Evangelist.
The Holy Innocents.

Monday

Monday } in *Easter W.* { Munday } in *Whits. W.*
 and } and }
 Tuesday } Tuesday }

A Table of the Vigils, Fasts, and Days of Abstinence, to be observed in the Year.

The Evens or Vigils before	{	The Nativity of our Lord.
		The Purification of the blessed Virgin <i>Mary</i> .
		The Annunciation of the blessed Virgin.
		<i>Easter-day.</i>
		<i>Ascension-day.</i>
		<i>Pentecost.</i>
		<i>S. Matthias.</i>
		<i>S. John Baptist.</i>
		<i>S. Peter.</i>
		<i>S. James.</i>
		<i>S. Bartholomew.</i>
		<i>S. Matthew.</i>
		<i>S. Simon and S. Jude.</i>
		<i>S. Andrew.</i>
<i>S. Thomas.</i>		
	All Saints.	

Note that if any of these Feast-days fall upon a Monday, then the Vigil or Fast-day shall be kept upon the Saturday, and not upon the Sunday next before it.

Days

Days of Fasting or Abstinence.

- I. The forty Days of Lent.
 - II. The Ember days at the } the First Sund. in Lent.
four Seasons, being the } the Feast of Pentecost.
Wednesday, Friday, { September 14.
and Saturday after } December 13.
 - III. The three Rogation Days, being the Monday,
Tuesday and Wednesday before Holy Thursday,
or the Ascension of our Lord.
 - IV. All the Fridays in the Year, except *Christmas-day*.
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ERRA-

ERRATA.

PAge 446, 447. for *Rogation-Days*, read *Ember-Days*
in *Whitfun-Week*, p. 448. for *Rogation-Days*, r. *Em-*
ber-Days.

Preliminary Instructions,

CONCERNING

FESTIVALS.

Quest. **W**HAT do you mean by Festivals?

Ans. Days set apart by the Church, either for the Remembrance of some special Mercies of God, such as the Birth, and Resurrection of Christ, the Descent of the Holy Ghost, &c. or in Memory of the great *Heroes* of the Christian Religion, the blessed Apostles and other Saints, who were the happy Instruments of conveying to us the Knowledge of Christ Jesus, by preaching his Gospel through the World, and most of them attesting the Truth of it with their Blood.

Q. *Of what Authority is the Observation of these Festivals?*

A. They are of Ecclesiastical Institution; agreeable to Scripture in the general Design of them, for the promoting of Piety; consonant to the Practice of the primitive Church, as appears by the joint Consent of Antiquity.

Q. *Are not Holy-Days enforced by the Laws of the Land?*

A. When upon the Reformation the Liturgy was settled and established, such Days were enjoined to be observed; as plainly appears by the

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Statutes

2 & 3 Ed. Statutes of Edward VI. and tho' these Laws
 6. cap. 1. were abrogated by Q. Mary, yet they were re-
 & 19. vived in the first Year of Q. Elizabeth, and con-
 5 & 6 Ed. tinued in the first of K. James. And when upon
 6 cap. 3. the Restoration, K. Charles II. issued out a
 Commission for the reviewing of the Liturgy,
 and making such Alterations as should appear to
 be fit and necessary; the Alterations made by the
 Commissioners, were brought to the Convoca-
 tion then sitting, where they were Synodically
 agreed upon, and the King and Parliament con-
 firmed all these Proceedings, as the *Act of Uni-*
formity testifies. In which the Rubrick and the
 Rules relating to the Liturgy are established by
 Royal Authority as well as the Liturgy it self.

Q. But is not the Observation of Days super-
 stitious?

A. There is an Observation of Days certainly
 Deut. 18. superstitious, if not idolatrous, since in *Deute-*
 10. *ronomy* an *Observer of Times* is declared an Abo-
 Levit. 19. mination to the Lord: And 'tis one of the Pro-
 26. vocations for which the *Gentiles* were driven
 out of the Land. And the *Galatians* are re-
 Gal. 4. 10, proached by St. Paul, for observing Days, and
 11. Months, and Times, and Years; which appear-
 ed to him so criminal, that upon this Account
 he feared the Labour he had bestow'd upon
 them had been in vain.

Q. What kind of Days are they whose Obser-
 vation is here condemned?

A. Such as were dedicated by the Heathens
 to their false Gods, or such as were observed by
 them as lucky or unlucky Days; these being the
 Abominations of the Heathens condemned in
Deuteronomy: Or those of the *Jews*, which
 though abrogated, the Judaizing Christians at
 temple



tempted to impose upon the *Galatians*, as necessary to Salvation; contrary to the Apostle's endeavours of setting them at liberty in the freedom of the Gospel; and to the Doctrine of *Salvation by Christ alone*, which might justly make him afraid of them.

Q. *Is the Observation of such Days as are in use among Christians, forbidden in Scripture?*

A. No: Because God, who had in Abomination the *Observer of Times*, does himself ordain several *Feasts* to be observed in Memory of past Benefits; as the *Feast of the Passover, Of Weeks, and Of Tabernacles*. Besides, our Saviour kept a Feast of the Church's Institution, *viz. the Feast of Dedication*: And the common Practice of all Christian Churches and States in appointing and keeping Days of Publick Thanksgiving and Humiliation, is Argument sufficient to prove, that in the common Sense of Christians 'tis not forbidden in Scripture.

Q. *What may be pleaded for such Days, from the Design of their Institution?*

A. It being not only good but a great Duty to be grateful, and to give Thanks to God for the Blessings we receive from him, it must be not only lawful, but commendable, upon the account of Gratitude, to appoint and observe Days for the particular Remembrance of such Blessings, and to give Thanks for them. The sanctifying such Days being a Token of that Thankfulness, and Part of that Publick Honour, which we owe to God for his inestimable Benefits.

Q. *But do not these Festivals restrain the Praises of God to certain Times, which ought to be extended to all Times?*

A. No Duty can be perform'd without the Circumstance of Time; and that there is a certain Time allotted for this Duty, tends only to the securing of some Time for the Exercise of the Duty, against the Frailties of Men, and the Disturbances of the World, which otherwise might supplant and rob it of all. And tho' the Days of Solemnity, which are but few, must quickly finish that outward Exercise of Devotion, which appertaineth to such Times; yet they increase Mens inward Dispositions to Vertue for the present, and by their frequent Returns, bring the same at length to great Perfection. What the Gospel enjoins is a constant Disposition of Mind to practise all Christian Vertues, as often as Time and Opportunity require; and not a Perpetuity of Exercise and Action, it being impossible at one and the same time to discharge Variety of Duties.

Q. Is not the hallowing unto God *more Days than one*, against the meaning of the fourth Commandment, *Six Days thou shalt labour*; whence some argue, that 'tis no more lawful for Humane Authority to forbid Working any of the Six Days, than to forbid the Holy Observation of the Seventh?

A. By the *Solemn Feasts* which were establish'd by God Himself, each of them at least of a Week's Continuance, it is manifest, that [*Six Days shalt thou labour*] is no Commandment but expresses only an ordinary Permission of Working: For it could not be but that some Days of these Holy Feasts must be of the Six. And it is not to be thought God would contradict his own Commandment, by a contrary Institution. As therefore when he commanded that
Me

Men should give *the tenth of their Increase*, he Lev. 27-32. forbad not *Free-will Offerings*, so when he commanded one Day in seven to be kept *Holy*, this hindereth not the Church from hallowing to God other Days of the *Six*: As the Church of the *Jews*, to whom the Commandment was given, did, in the Dedication of the Temple, the Feast of *Purim*, &c.

Q. Is not the Church of England's Symbolizing with the Church of Rome, in hallowing of Days, an Objection against the Observation of them?

A. I apprehend it is not; because Conformity to any Church in such institutions as tend to promote Piety, and are agreeable to *Scripture* and primitive *Antiquity*, no way deserves Censure: Neither is the *Church of Rome* blameable for hallowing of Days, but for grafting upon them such erroneous and superstitious Practices, as are unknown to *Scripture*, and to the purest *Ages* of the Church: For which Reason, and many more very substantial, we were forced to separate from her Communion.

Q. But does not the Abuse of Festivals to Intemperance and Luxury, make it necessary to have them abolished?

A. I think this a very terrible Objection, somewhat of the Nature of that of the scandalous Lives of Christians against the Efficacy of the Christian Religion; but as that is an Objection not so strong against Christianity as it is shameful to Christians; so this perverting of *Holy Seasons*, shews only the great Depravity of Mankind in turning their Food into Poison; and no way reflects upon the Prudence and Piety of the Institution. For as they who are intemperately disposed, do upon these occasions turn *Feasting*

into *Luxury* and *Excess*; so the same Men treat the *Lord's Day* with as little respect, and make the advantage of Rest and Leisure from their worldly Affairs only an instrument to promote their Pleasure and Diversions. But I wish Christians would lay this seriously to heart, and retrieve the Honour of such *Holy Seasons* by the Exercises of Piety and Charity; lest our Spiritual Governours should be forced to lay these *Festivals* aside, as 'tis certain the Ancient Church was to abolish even some Apostolical Rites, viz. the *Agape* and *Kiss of Charity*, thro' Mens obstinate Abuse of them.

Q. *Whence arose those Festivals in the Primitive Church, that were kept in Commemoration of Martyrs?*

A. From the great Reverence People then had for those who suffered for the Profession of Christianity, and laid down their Lives for the Confirmation of it: Thus the Church of Smyrna Euseb. Hist. lib. 4. c. 15. professed they *worthily loved the Martyrs, as the Disciples and Followers of our Lord; and because of their exceeding great Affection to their King and their Master.* Upon this Account they thought it reasonable to do all possible Honour to their Memories; partly that others might be encouraged to the same Patience and Fortitude, and partly that Vertue, even in this World, might not lose its Reward.

Q. *How did they use to observe these Festivals?*

A. They were wont once a Year to meet at the *Graves of the Martyrs*; there solemnly to recite their Sufferings, and Triumphs, to praise their Vertues, to bless God for their pious Examples, for their Holy Lives and their Happy Deaths.

Deaths : Besides, they celebrated these Days with great Expressions of Love and Charity to the Poor, and mutual Rejoycings with one another : Which were very sober and temperate, and such as became the Modesty and Simplicity of Christians.

Q. *Were these Annual Solemnities early practised in the Church?*

A. 'Tis certain they were very Ancient; tho' when they first began is not exactly known. In the *Acts* of the Martyrdom of St. Ignatius we find that those that were Eye-witnesses of his Sufferings, for this Reason published the Day of his *Martyrdom*, (which, according to learned Men, happen'd about the Year 110.) that the Church of *Antioch* might meet together at that time to celebrate the *Memory* of such a *valiant Combatant* and *Martyr of Christ*. After this we read of the Church of *Smyrna's* giving an Account of St. *Polycarp's* Martyrdom (which was A. C. 168.) and of the Place where they had entomb'd his Bones; and withal professing, that they would assemble in that Place, and celebrate the *Birth-day* of his *Martyrdom* with Joy and Gladness; both in Memory of what he suffered, and for the Exercise and Preparation of those that might hereafter suffer. *Tertullian* who is very careful in recounting the Practices of the Primitive Church, affirms, that Christians were wont to celebrate yearly the Days of the *Martyrs Birth*, that is, their *Sufferings*, as a custom received from the *Tradition* of their Ancestors. In *Constantine's* Time these Days were commanded to be observ'd with great Care and Strictness; and it was thought a piece of Prophaneness to be absent from the Meetings of the Christians at

Ast. Mart, Ignat.

Euseb. Hist. lib. 4. c. 15.

De Corp. c. 3.

De Vit. Const. lib. 4. c. 23.

Ser. 253. de temp. such Times. And St. *Augustine* makes it a character of a Son of the Church to observe the *Festivals of the Church*.

Q. *Why did they call the Days of their Death their Birth-days?*

A. Because they looked upon those as the true Days of their Nativity, wherein they were freed from the Pains and Sorrows of a troublesome World, placed out of the reach of Sin and Temptation, delivered from this Valley of Tears, these Regions of Death and Misery; and born again unto the Joys and Happiness of an endless Life, an Inheritance incorruptible that fadeth not away.

Q. *How ought we to observe the Festivals of the Church?*

A. In such a manner as may answer the Ends for which they were appointed: That God may be glorified by an humble and grateful Acknowledgement of his Mercies, and that the Salvation of our Souls may be advanced by firmly believing the Mysteries of our Redemption, and by imitating the Example of those primitive Patterns of Piety that are set before us.

Q. *What manner of keeping these Days answers these Ends?*

A. We should constantly attend the *Publick Worship*, and partake of the *Blessed Sacrament*, if it be administered. In private we should enlarge our *Devotions*, and suffer the Affairs of the World to interrupt us as little as may be. We should particularly express our Rejoycing by *Love and Charity* to our poor Neighbours. If we commemorate any *Mystery* of our *Redemption* or Article of our Faith; we ought to confirm our belief of it, by considering all those Reasons
upon

upon which it is built; that we may be able to give a good Account of the Hope that is in us. We should from our Hearts offer to God the *Sacrifice of Thanksgiving*, and resolve to perform all those Duties which result from the Belief of such an Article. If we commemorate any *Saint*, we should consider the Vertues for which he was most eminent, and by what steps he arriv'd at so great Perfection; and then examine our selves how far we are defective in our Duty, and earnestly beg God's Pardon for our past Failings, and his Grace to enable us to conform our Lives for the time to come to those admirable Examples that are set before us.

Q. What Command is there concerning the Manner of observing Festivals under the Law?

A. That they should not appear before the Lord empty. Every Man shall give as he is Deut. 16. 16, 17. *able, &c. Wherein is contained a special Duty of all, when they came to worship God at these Feasts, viz. to bring a Present, a Heave Offering; which kind was a Tribute of Thankfulness unto God, and withal an Acknowledgment of his supreme Dominion over all. According to this Rule, at the Feast of the Passover the Jews brought a Sheaf of the First Fruits of their Harvest unto the Priest, and he was to wave it before the Lord; and until this was done they might eat no Corn in the green Ear. And at this Feast they paid their Firstlings and Tithes of Cattel. At the Feast of Pentecost, when Harvest was ended, they brought two wave Loaves* Lev. 23. 17, 22. *of their new Corn; at which time also they paid Tithes of Corn, so much as was threshed; and a Tribute also of a free-will Offering of their band. To this may be referred the Precept of*
not

not gathering their Land clean, but that something should be left to the Poor to glean, which was a secondary Offering to God himself. At the Feast of Tabernacles they offered First-fruits and Tithes of Wine and Oil, which was the Offering of that Season. And in the Commandment of this Feast, we also find a Precept of not gathering their Grapes and Fruits clean, in behalf of the Poor.

Deut. 24.
21.

Q. How far are Christians obliged to any Imitation in this particular ?

A. They are certainly bound not to appear before the Lord with empty Hands. It is not enough to give at other times, but 'tis a proper piece of the Worship to be practised at holy Seasons. For the Actions of Men in holy Assemblies, are not like their private Actions at other times; for all the Actions in publick, are to be accounted as one Action of the whole Body, every Prayer, the Prayer of all as one. Whatsoever Worship God requires of any one alone, the same he requires also of all met together as one, being God of the Body as a Church, as well as of any one Member as a Christian. In reference to Offerings in Holy Assemblies, thus St. Paul ordains, thus the primitive Christians practised, as is plain from Justin Martyr and Irenaus.

1 Cor. 16.
2.

Q. How are Festivals prophaned ?

A. When they are not regarded nor distinguished from common Days; when they are made Instruments of Vice and Vanity; when they are spent in Luxury and Debauchery; when our Joy degenerates into Sensuality, and we express it by Intemperance and Excess. And 'tis a very great Aggravation of our Sins at such times, to abuse the Memory of the greatest Blessings,

Blessings, by making them occasions of offending God.

Q. What are the Advantages of a serious Observation of Festivals?

A. It testifies our great Regard to the *Institutions* of the Church, and our Obedience to our Spiritual Superiors, *to whom we ought to submit, Heb. 13. 17.* as to those that watch for our Souls. It fixes in our Thoughts the great Mysteries of our Redemption. It fills our Hearts with a thankful Sense of God's great Goodness. It raises our Minds above the World, and inures us to a sober Frame and Temper of Soul. It kindles a prudent Zeal and Fervour in performing the Offices of Religion; and is very apt to produce a Readiness to do or suffer any thing for the Name of Jesus.

The PRAYERS.

I.

A Almighty God, who hast established in thy Church Pastors, and Teachers, and Governors, *for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ;* Eph. 4. 12 make me careful to observe all those Institutions, which are enjoy'd, for these admirable Ends; and always to esteem Days set apart for thy Worship, and dedicated to thy Service, as a great Relief to the Infirmary of my Nature, which is not capable of an uninterrupted Contemplation of thee. Let not the Affairs of this Life, nor my eagerness in obtaining the good things of it, so far engross my Thoughts, as to make me neglect those happy Opportunities

ties of working out my own Salvation. Let not the Love of Pleasure prevail upon me to consume them in sensual Enjoyments; but grant that my rejoycing may be accompanied with Temperance and Moderation; and dispose my Mind, by all the Refreshments of my Body, to serve thee with greater Diligence and Chearfulness all my Days. Make me constant at these *holy Seasons* in attending thy publick Worship, and let me enter thy House with recollected Thoughts, composed Behaviour, and with a thankful and devout Temper of Mind. Let me hear thy Word with serious Attention, and with a particular Application of it to the state of my own Soul. Let me approach thy Altar with fervent and heavenly Affections, and with firm Resolutions of better Obedience. Let me commemorate the Mysteries of my Redemption with profound Humility, with exalted Thoughts of thy wonderful Goodness, and with thankful Acknowledgements of thy great Love demonstrated to the Sons of Men. Let the mortified Lives of thy Saints raise me above the Pleasures of Sense; and let the Pattern of their Piety and Devotion, their Humility and Charity, their Meekness and patient Suffering, be always so lively imprinted upon my Mind, that I may transcribe their Example in my Life and Conversation. That thus observing these Days of Rest here below, I may celebrate an eternal Rest with thee hereafter in thy heavenly Kingdom, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

O Lord God, in whose fight the Death of thy Saints is precious, and tho' their Departure is

is taken for Misery, yet is their Hope full of Immortality; and having been a little chastised they are now greatly rewarded. Let the Memory of what they endured support thy Servants who are engaged in Combats and Trials here below. Abate the Power and Malice of their Enemies; that all that hate and persecute thy Church may be brought to Repentance, or miscarry in their cruel designs against it; that thy Name may be celebrated to all Generations; that thy Kingdom and thy Coming may be hastned; that thy Saints may obtain the Consummation of their Bliss, by the Resurrection of their Bodies and receiving the Crown of Righteousness, which thou hast prepared for all that put their Trust in thee; and that I with them may praise thy Name for ever and ever. *Amen.*

CHAP. I.

The Lord's Day.

Q. *What part of our Time has God appropriated to his immediate Service?*

A. One Day in seven, which he has commanded to be kept Holy. And we ought the rather to pay Obedience to Divine Authority in this particular, because it has liberally indulged the remaining part of our Time to our own use.

Q. *What do you mean by keeping a Day Holy?*

A. Setting

A. Setting it apart for the Exercises of Religious Duties, both in Publick and Private; abstaining from the Works of our ordinary Calling, or any other worldly Affairs and Recreations, which may hinder our attendance upon the Worship of God, and are not reconcilable with solemn Assemblies, and may defeat those Ends for which the Day was separated from common uses.

Q. *What Day was anciently set apart to this purpose?*

Gen. 2. 3.

A. The seventh; for God having in six Days made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is, he rested the seventh Day and hallowed it.

Q. *What mean you by God's resting from his Works?*

A. That the Creation of all Things was finished, and the World entirely made. This *resting of God* being spoken after the manner of Men, and implieth not any weariness in him; for the

Isai. 40. 28.

Creator of the ends of the Earth fainteth not, neither is weary. It was by the Ancients made the Symbol of the Rest of the Just from all their Labours; when all Grief, Sorrow, and Sighing shall fly away, and God shall be all in all.

Q. *Why was that seventh Day, called Saturday, commanded to be observed by the Jews?*

Ezek. 20.

20.

Exod. 31.

13.

A. To be a Sign to testify what God they worshipp'd, whereby they profess that *Jehovah*, and no other was the God of *Israel*; and consequently was an admirable Institution to secure them from *Idolatry*. For by sanctifying the seventh Day, after they had laboured six, they avowed themselves Worshipers of that only God, who created the Heaven and the Earth,

and

and having spent six Days in that great Work, rested the seventh Day; and therefore commanded this suitable distribution of their Time, as a Badge that their Religious Service was appropriated to him alone. And by sanctifying that *seventh Day*, namely *Saturday*, they profess themselves Servants of *Jehovah* their God, in a relation and respect peculiar and proper to themselves; viz. that they were Servants of that God, who *redeemed Israel out of the Land of Egypt*, and out of the House of Bondage. *Deut. 5. 15* For upon the Morning-Watch of that very Day they kept for their *Sabbath*, he overwhelmed *Pharaoh*, and all his Host, in the *Red-Sea*, and saved *Israel* that Day out of the Hand of the *Egyptians*.

Q. *How far, and in what manner, does the like Observation bind Christians?*

A. The *Christian*, as well as the *Jew*, after six Days spent in his own Works, is to sanctifie the *seventh*, that he may profess himself thereby a Servant of God the Creator of Heaven and Earth, as well as the *Jew*: But in the designation of the Day they differ. The *Christian* chuseth for his Day of Rest, the *first Day of the Week*; that he might thereby profess himself a Servant of that God, who on the Morning of that Day vanquish'd *Satan*, and redeemed us from our Spiritual Thralldom, by raising *Jesus Christ our Lord from the Dead*, begetting us, instead of an earthly *Canaan*, to an *Inheritance incorruptible in the Heavens*.

Q. *What Authority have we for the Change of this Day, from the seventh to the first Day of the Week?*

A. The

Act. 20. 7. *A.* The Authority and Practice of the Holy
1 Cor. 16. 2. *Apostles*, the first Planters of Christianity, who
 therein followed the moral Equity of the fourth
 Commandment. For the Deliverance of *Israel*
 out of *Egypt* by the Ministry of *Moses*, was
 intended for a Type and Pledge of the Spiritual
 Deliverance which was to come by Christ. Their
Canaan also to which they marched, being a
 Type of that heavenly Inheritance which the Re-
 deemed by Christ do look for. Since therefore
Colof. 2. the Shadow is made void by the coming of the
16, 17. Substance, the relation is changed, and God is
 no longer to be worshipp'd and believed in as a
 God fore-shewing and assuring by Types, but as
 a God who has performed the Substance of what
 he promised.

*Q. Why is the first Day of the Week called
 the Lord's Day?*

A. Not only because 'tis immediately dedi-
 cated to his Service; but because on that Day
 our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the Dead, and
 rested from the Work of our Redemption;
 which he compleated on that Day by his Re-
 surrection.

*Q. How did the Apostles and the Christians
 at first observe this Day?*

A. It plainly appears from the Scriptures, that
 the first Day of the Week, was their stated and
 solemn Time of Meeting for Publick Worship.

Acts 2. 1. On this Day the *Apostles* were assembled, when
 the *Holy Ghost* came down so visibly upon them
 to qualifie them for the Conversion of the World.

20. 7. On this Day we find *St. Paul* preaching at *Troas*,
 when the *Disciples* came together to break Bread,
 whereby is understood the Celebration of the Sa-
 crament, or their *Feasts of Charity*, which were
 always

always accompanied with the *Eucharist*. And the Directions the same Apostle gives to the *Corinthians*, concerning their Contributions for the relief of their poor suffering Brethren, seems plainly to regard their Religious Assemblies on the first Day of the Week. 1 Cor. 16. 2.

Q. How was this Day observed in the Primitive Church?

A. It appears from *Justin Martyr*, and *Pliny*, Just. Mar. Apol. 2. Plin. lib. 10. Epist. 97. Orig. lib. 3. cont. Cels. that the Christians of those times, both in City and Country, had their publick Meetings on *Sundays*. In which Assemblies the Writings of the *Apostles* and *Prophets* were read to the People, and the Doctrines of Christianity were farther pressed upon them by the Exhortations of the *Clergy*. Solemn Prayers were offered up to God, and Hymns sung in Honour of our *Saviour*; the Blessed Sacrament was administered to those that were present, and the consecrated Elements sent to those that were absent. Collections were made for the Relief of the Poor, whether Widows or Orphans, Prisoners or Strangers, or others labouring under Sicknes or any Necessities.

Q. Tho' the most proper Name of this Day of publick Worship, is as St. John himself calls it, the Lord's Day, did the Primitive Christians scruple the calling it Sunday? Rev. 1. 10.

A. No: *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian* both call it so; because it happen'd upon that Day of the Week which by the Heathens was dedicated to the Sun; and therefore as being best known to them, the Fathers commonly made use of it, in their Apologies to the Heathen Governours: And it seldom passes under any other Name in the *Imperial Edicts* of the first Christian Emperors. Just. Mart. Apol. 2. Tert. Apol. ad Nation. l. 1.

Q. In what sense may the Lord's Day be called the Sabbath?

A. In that we rest on that Day from the Works of our ordinary Callings, and all other worldly Employments, and dedicate it to the immediate Worship of God, whose Service is perfect Freedom. But by Scripture, Antiquity, and all Ecclesiastical Writers, it is constantly appropriated to Saturday the Day of the Jews Sabbath, and but of late Years used to signify the Lord's Day; so that tho' the charge of Judaism upon those that use it in a Christian sense appears too severe, yet upon many respects it might be expedient but sparingly to distinguish the Day of the Christian Worship by the name of the Sabbath.

Q. Was not the Sabbath anciently observed as well as the Lord's Day?

A. Tho' the necessity of observing the Jewish Sabbath was vacated by the Apostolical Institution of the Lord's Day, and by our Saviour's having blotted out the hand-writing of Ordinances; whereby it became as unreasonable for any one to condemn a Christian for not observing the Jewish Sabbath, as it was for neglecting their other Ceremonial Institutions. Yet, in the East where the Gospel chiefly prevailed among the Jews, who retained a mighty Reverence for the Mosaic Rites; the Church thought fit so far to indulge the Humour of the Judaizing Converts, as to observe Saturday as a Festival Day of Devotion, whereon they met for public Prayers, and for the Exercise of other Duties of Religion, as is plain from several passages in the Ancients. But however, to prevent Scandal, they openly declared, they did it only in a Christian

Col. 2. 14,
16.

Col. 1. 16.

J. 1. 16.

J. 1. 16.

J. 1. 16.

J. 1. 16.

Athan. de

Sement.

Socrat. Hist.

Eccl. lib. 6.

c. 8.

Christian way, and observed it not as a *Jewish Sabbath*; and this *Custom* was so far from being *universal*, that at the same time all over the *West*, except at *Milan in Italy*, *Saturday* was kept as a *Fast*.

Q. *What particular Custom did the primitive Christians observe in their Devotions on the Lord's Day?*

A. They prayed standing; symbolically representing our Resurrection or Restitution by the Grace of Christ, by which we are delivered from our Sins, and from the power of Death. And this Custom was maintained with so much vigour, that when some began to neglect it, the great Council of *Nice* ordained there should be Can. 20. a constant *uniformity* in this Case; and that on the *Lord's Day* Men should stand when they made their Prayers to God.

Q. *Is it proper to fast on the Lord's Day?*

A. No: Because it is to be celebrated with Expressions of Joy, as being the happy Memorial of Christ's Resurrection; and therefore whatever favours of Sadness and Sorrow ought to be restrained. The Primitive Christians prohibited Tertul. de corn. c. 3. it with great Severity, and never fasted on it, tho' in the time of *Lent*: The Hereticks, who denied the Resurrection of Christ, fasted on all *Sundays*, because they would not honour the Mystery.

Q. *Did the Christian Emperors use their Authority to oblige their Subjects to keep this Day holy?*

A. *Constantine* and *Theodosius* both prohibited the Profanation of this Day, either by the Euseb. de Vit. Const. l. 4. c. 18. Works of Mens ordinary Calling, even of those who were yet Strangers and Enemies to Christianity;

Cod. Just. ftianity ; or by any Publick Shews ; that the
de feriis, Worship of God might not be confounded with
.3. tit. 12. those profane Solemnities.
.3. ib. l. 7.

Q. How ought Christians to observe this Day ?

A. It is not enough that we rest from the Works of our Calling, but our time must be employed in all such Religious Exercises as tend to the Glory of God, and the Salvation of our Souls. We must regularly frequent the Worship of God in the Publick Assemblies, join in the Prayers of the Church, hear his holy Word, receive the blessed Sacrament when administred, and contribute to the Relief of the Poor, if there be any Collection for their Support. In Private we ought to enlarge our ordinary Devotions, and to make the Subject of them chiefly to consist in Thanksgivings for the Works of *Creation* and *Redemption* ; withal, recollecting all those particular Mercies we have received from the Bounty of Heaven thro' the whole course of our Lives : To improve our Knowledge by reading and meditating upon Divine Subjects ; to instruct our Children and Families ; to visit the Sick and the Poor, comforting them by some seasonable Assistance : And if we converse with our Friends or Neighbours, to season our Discourse with prudent and profitable Hints for the Advancement of Piety ; and to take care that no Sowness or Moroseness mingle with our serious frame of Mind.

Q. What seems to be the most obligatory Duty upon this Day ?

A. Being present at the *Assemblies of Publick Worship*, from which nothing but Sickness or absolute Necessity should detain us : For the
Day

Day being dedicated not only to the Honour and Worship of God, but also appointed to this end, that we might openly profess our selves Christians ; it must be an Argument we are very little concern'd to do either, if we abstain from God's solemn Worship at such times. Nothing troubled the Primitive Christians more, than, when Sick and in Prison, or under Banishment, that they could not come to Church ; no trivial Pretences were then admitted for any one's Absence from the Congregation, but according to the Merit of the Cause, severe Censures were past upon them.

Q. *What are the great Advantages of the Religious Observation of the Lord's Day ?*

A. It keeps up the *Solemn and Publick Worship* of God, which might be very much neglected, if it were left to depend upon the Determinations of Humane Authority. It preserves the *Knowledge and visible Profession* of the *Christian Religion* in the World, when, notwithstanding the great Differences there are among Christians in other Matters, they yet all concur in observing this Day in Memory of our *Saviour's Resurrection*. And considering how much time is taken up, by the greatest part of Mankind, in providing for the Necessaries of Life ; and how negligent and careless they are in the Concerns of their Souls, who flow in plenty and abundance ; this *stated Season* is highly useful to instruct the *Ignorant* by *Preaching* and *Catechizing*, and to put those in mind of their Duty who in their Prosperity are apt to forget God. Moreover, by spending this Day in Religious Exercises, we acquire new Strength and Resolution

to perform God's Will in our several Stations the Week following.

Q. Since a great part of the Duty of the Day consists in Thanksgiving, pray what is implied in that Duty?

A. A due acknowledgment of God's Blessings; a just Value and Esteem of them; and a Desire and Endeavour to make all possible Returns.

Q. When may we be said duly to acknowledge God's Mercies?

A. When we do not let them pass undiscerned and unregarded by us, but carefully consider and take notice of them; and when we do not ascribe the good Things he has given us to our own Deserts and Endeavours, or to any other Thing or Creature, but only to Him. All glorying in our selves, takes from the acknowledgment of the Giver's Bounty.

Q. When may we be said to have a just Value and Esteem of God's Mercies?

A. When we retain them in our Memory, and make frequent Reflections upon them; it being natural to remember those things we highly prize. When we do not grudge or repine at our Portion, but are contented with those Circumstances which the Providence of God has made to be our Lot.

Q. What return ought we to make to God as a Testimony of our Thankfulness?

A. We ought to profess our Dependence upon him, and our Obligations to him for the good things we enjoy; we ought to publish to the World our Sense of his Goodness with the Voice of Praise, and tell of all his wondrous Works. We ought to comfort his Servants and Children
in

in their Afflictions, and relieve his poor distressed Members in their manifold Necessities, for *he that giveth Alms sacrificeth Praise.* We ought carefully to obey him in all those instances wherein he has declared his Will and Pleasure, and be ready to sacrifice the dearest things in this World, even our Lives, for the Advancement of his Glory, and the Maintenance of his Truth.

THE PRAYERS.

I.

GLORY be to thee, O my God, who in Com-Ep. Rem. passion to humane Weakness, which is not capable of an uninterrupted Contemplation of thee, such as the Saints have above, hast appointed a solemn Day on purpose for thy Remembrance. Glory be to thee, for proportioning a seventh part of our Time to thy self, and liberally indulging the remainder to our own use. Let me ever esteem it my Privilege and my Happiness, to have a Day of Rest set apart for thy Service, and the Concerns of my own Soul; to have a Day free from Distractions, disengaged from the World, wherein I have nothing to do but to praise and to love thee. Give me Grace to worship thee in my Closet, and in the Congregation; to spend it in doing good, in Works of Necessity, Devotion, and Charity, in Prayer and Praise and Meditation; O let it be ever to me a Day sacred to Divine Love, a Day of heavenly Rest and Refreshment. Grant, O Lord, I may not only give thee due Worship my self, but may give Rest and Leisure also to my Family, to all under my Charge, to serve thee also; to in-
C 4 dolge

dulge ease to my very Beasts, since good Men are merciful even to them. O blessed Spirit, who on the first Day of the Week didst descend in miraculous Gifts and Graces on the Apostles, descend upon me, that I may be always *in the Spirit on the Lord's Day*. And since the Blessing of everlasting Salvation, which we Christians on thy Day commemorate, does wonderfully exceed the Creation commemorated by the *Jews*; O let our Love and Praise, Devotion and Zeal, proportionably exceed theirs also: And this I beg for Jesus Christ his sake, our Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

II.

Worthy art thou, O Lord of Heaven and Earth, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy Pleasure they are and were created. Thou hast made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens, with all their Host, the Earth, and all Things that are therein; thou preservest them all, and the Host of Heaven praiseth thee. Glory be to thee, O Lord God Almighty, for creating Man after thine own Image, and making so great a variety of Creatures to minister to his use. Glory be to thee, O heavenly Father, for my Being and Preservation, Strength and Health, Understanding and Memory, Friends and Benefactors, and for all my Abilities of Mind and Body. Glory be to thee, for my competent Livelihood, for the Advantages of my Education, for all my known or unobserved Deliverances; and for the Guard thy Holy Angels keep over me. But above all, Glory be to thee, for giving thy Son to dye for my Sins; and for all the Spiritual Blessings

Blessings he has purchas'd for me ; for my Baptism and all the Opportunities thou givest me of serving thee, and of receiving the Holy Eucharist ; for whatever Sin I have escaped, for whatever Good I have done or thought, for all my Helps of Grace and Hopes of Heaven, Glory be to thee. *Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, praise his Holy Name.*

Glory be to thee, O Lord Jesus, for thy inexpressible Love to lost Man ; for condescending to take our frail Nature on thee, for all thy heavenly Doctrine to instruct us, thy great Miracles to convince us, and thy unblamable Example to be a Guide to us. Glory be to thee, for thy Agony and bloody Sweat, for all the Torments and Anguish of thy bitter Passion. Glory be to thee, for thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven, and Intercession for us at the right Hand of thy Father. O gracious Lord, thou who hast done so much for me, how can I ever sufficiently praise and love thee ! *Praise the Lord Jesus, O my Soul, and all that is within me praise his Holy Name !*

Glory be to thee, O blessed Spirit, Glory be to thee, for all the miraculous Gifts and Graces thou didst bestow on the Apostles, to fit them to convert the World, and for inspiring the Sacred Penmen of Holy Scripture ! Glory be to thee, for instilling Holy Thoughts into my Soul, for all the ghostly Strength and Support, Comfort and Illumination I receive from Thee ; for all thy preventing and restraining and sanctifying Grace ! Glory be to thee ! Blessed Spirit, let me never more by my Sins grieve thee, who art the Author of Life and Joy to me ! *Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me praise his Holy Name.*

Blessing

Blessing and Honour, Thanksgiving and Praise, more than I can utter, more than I can conceive, be unto thee, O most adorable Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by all Angels, all Men, all Creatures, for ever and for ever. *Amen, Amen.*

C H A P. II.

Advent Sundays.

Q. **W**^{Hat do you mean by Advent Sun-}
^{days ?}

A. The four *Sundays* that precede the *Great Festival* of our Saviour's Nativity ; which make a part of that time appointed by the Church to prepare our Minds by proper Meditations for a due Commemoration of Christ's coming in the *Flesh*.

Q. *With what Temper of Mind ought we to commemorate the great Blessing of Christ's Coming in the Flesh ?*

A. With firm Purposes and sincere Resolutions of conforming our selves to the End and Design of our Saviour's coming into the World.

John 3.8. For since the *Son of God was manifested to destroy the Works of the Devil*, the great Care and Business of our Lives should tend to avoid every thing that is evil, to mortifie the Deeds of the *Flesh*, and not suffer *Sin to reign in our mortal Bodies, to obey it in the Lusts thereof* ; that since he gave himself for us to purifie to

Rom. 6.12.

Tit. 2. 14. himself a peculiar People, *zealous of good Works* ;

we

we should give all Diligence to add to our Faith 2 Pet. 1. 5.
 Vertue, to Vertue Knowledge, to Knowledge
 Temperance, to Temperance Patience, to Pati-
 ence Godliness, to Godliness Brotherly Kindness,
 and to Brotherly Kindness Charity ; for if these
 things be in us, and abound, we shall neither be
 barren nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of our
 Lord Jesus Christ.

*Q. What Consideration does the Church offer
 to us, as proper to bring our Lives to a Confor-
 mity with the End and Design of Christ's Com-
 ing in the Flesh ?*

*A. The consideration of his second Coming to
 judge the World, when he will execute Ven-
 geance upon all those that obey not the Gospel
 of Christ.*

*Q. What do you mean by Christ's Coming to
 Judgment ?*

*A. That our Lord Jesus Christ shall at the
 end of the World descend from Heaven in his
 humane Nature ; and summon all Mankind to
 appear before his dreadful Tribunal ; where they
 shall come upon their Trial, have all their Acti-
 ons strictly examined, and according to the Na-
 ture and Quality of them, be adjudged to eternal
 Happiness or eternal Misery.*

*Q. How does it appear that there shall be a
 general Judgment ?*

*A. Both from the Principles of Reason, and
 the clear and exprefs Testimonies of Scrip-
 ture.*

*Q. How does it appear from the Principles
 of Reason that there shall be a general Judg-
 ment ?*

*A. The Light of Nature discovers to us an
 essential Difference between Good and Evil,
 whence,*

whence, by the common consent of Mankind, Rewards are affix'd to the one, and Punishments to the other. And according as Men govern their Actions in relation to these essential Differences of Good and Evil, so are their Hopes and their Fears. The Practice of *Vertue* is attended not only with present *Quiet* and *Satisfaction*, but with the comfortable Hope of a future *Recompence*; the Commission of any wicked Action, tho' never so secret, fits uneasie upon the Mind, and fills it full of *Horror* and Amazement; all which would be very unaccountable, without the natural apprehension and acknowledgment of future Rewards and Punishments. And it must be from this Principle, that many of the Heathens esteemed Vertue and Honesty dearer than Life, with all the Advantages of it, and abhorred Villany and Impiety worse than Death. Besides, the *Dispensations* of God's Providence towards Men in this World are very *promiscuous*; good Men often suffer, and that even for the sake of Righteousness, and bad Men as frequently prosper and flourish, and that by the means of their Wickedness. So that to clear the Justice of God's Proceedings, it seems reasonable there should be a future Judgment for a suitable Distribution of Rewards and Punishments. And

Ad Grac. this Principle of a Judgment to come, *Justin*
 cohor. p. 1. *Martyr* propounds to the Gentiles as generally
 acknowledged by all their Writers, and as the
 great Encouragement for his Apology for the
 Christian Religion.

Q. How does it appear from Scripture that there shall be a general Jugment?

Acts 17. 31. A. God has given assurance unto all Men, that he will judge the World by Jesus Christ, in that

that he hath raised him from the dead. And the Process of that Great Day, with several of the particular Circumstances of it, are fully described by our Saviour. St. Paul declares expressly Mat. 25. that we must all appear and stand before the Rom. 14. Judgment Seat of Christ. St. Peter, that the 10. Day of the Lord shall come, in which the Hea- 2 Cor. 5. 10. vens shall pass away with a great noise, and the 2 Pet. 3. 10. Elements shall melt with fervent heat. No Doctrine more clear and express and fundamental in the Word of God, than that of eternal Judgment. Heb. 6. 2.

Q. When shall this general Judgment be?

A. At the end of the World. When the state of our Trial and Probation shall be finish'd, 'twill be a proper Season for the distribution of publick Justice, for the rewarding all those with eternal Life, who by patient continuance in well- Rom. 2. 7, doing, seek for Glory and Honour and Immor- 8, 9. tality. And for rendring to them that obey not the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness, Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish.

Q. But if every Man upon his Death shall be sentenced to an eternal state of Happiness or Misery, what need is there of a general Judgment?

A. Tho' 'tis plain from Scripture, that good Men when they die pass into a state of Happiness, and bad Men into a state of Misery; yet all the Declarations of our Saviour and his Apostles concerning Judgment, with the Parables that relate to it, plainly refer to the last and general Judgment; for then it is only that the whole Man shall be compleatly happy or compleatly miserable; then it is that the Bodies of Men shall be raised, and as they have been Partakers

takers with the Soul either in obeying or offending God, so shall they then share in the Rewards or Punishments of it; and then only can the *Degrees* and *Measures* of their Happiness and Misery be truly adjusted, for even after Death the Effect of Mens good or bad Actions may add to their Punishment, or increase their Reward; by the good or bad Examples they have given, by the good or bad Books they have writ, by the Foundations they have establish'd for Piety and Virtue, or by the Customs they have introduc'd to countenance Vice and Immorality. Then it is that the reasonableness of God's Providence, in relation to the Sufferings of good Men in this World, will be fully justified; and his Goodness as amply cleared in those severe Punishments that shall be eternally inflicted upon the wicked. Moreover, this *general Judgment* is necessary to display the *Majesty* and *Glory* of our Blessed Saviour; that by this publick Act of Honour and Authority, he may receive some Recompence for the Contempt and Ignominy which he met with, from a wicked and ungrateful World; and that his despised Servants may be owned by him in the sight of Angels and Men, to the great Confusion of all those miserable Wretches that shall then be doomed to everlasting Torments; that publick Justice may be done to those Vertues their Humility took care to conceal, which were sullied by the Calumnies and Slanders of malicious Men, and which by the false Judgment of the World were represented as the effects of Folly and Extravagance. But I may add farther, when God has plainly declared that there shall be a *general Judgment*, notwithstanding that good Men up-

on their Death go into a state of Happiness, and bad Men into a state of Misery; 'tis absolutely necessary Men should entirely believe it, granting that they were not able to assign any Reasons to justify such a Procedure.

Q. To whom has God committed the Administration of this Judgment?

A. The Lord Jesus Christ is constituted by God, to administer the Judgment of the Great Day. God will Judge the World in Righteousness by that Man Jesus Christ whom he hath ordained. The Son of Man shall come in the Glory of his Father with his Holy Angels, and then shall be reward every Man according to his Work. The Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to his Son. The Apostles were commanded to preach unto the People, and testifie, that it is Jesus that is ordained of God to be Judge of quick and dead. And the Tribunal is called the Judgment-seat of Christ. Acts 17.31. Mat. 16.27. Joh. 5. 22. Acts 10.42. Rom. 14.10. By which Texts it plainly appears, that tho' the right of Judging us belongs to God, whose Servants and Subjects we are, yet the Execution of this Judiciary Power is particularly committed to the Son of Man, who is the second Person in the Blessed Trinity.

Q. Why is the Administration of this Judgment committed to the Lord Jesus Christ?

A. That all Men should honour the Son, as they honour the Father, and because he is the Son of Man. That our blessed Saviour might receive publick Honour in that Nature wherein he suffered; that he who for our sakes stood before an Earthly Tribunal, might therefore be constituted Judge of the whole World; that he who was despised and rejected of Men, might appear in

in the Glory of his Father, attended with an innumerable Train of Holy Angels; that he who was condemned and crucified to absolve us, might receive Authority to absolve and condemn the whole Race of Mankind: And because being clothed with a Humane Body, he will make a visible Appearance, which will be suitable to the other Circumstances of the Great Day; which will all be performed in a visible Manner. Besides, Mankind being judged by one in their own Nature, a Man like themselves, touched with a feeling of our Infirmities, greatly declares the Equity of this Judgment, because he understands all our Circumstances, and whatever may influence our Case to extenuate or aggravate our Guilt.

Q. Who are those that shall be judged?

Jude 6.

A. Angels and all Mankind. The fallen Angels are reserved in everlasting Chains under Darknes, unto the Judgment of the great Day.

1 Cor. 6. 3.

And St. Paul says, Know you not that we shall judge Angels, that is, sit with Christ and approve that Sentence he shall then pronounce against them. And all Men that have ever lived in the World, and those that shall be alive at

Mat. 25. 32.

our Saviour's coming shall be gathered before him, who is ordained by God to be Judge of quick and dead, and they shall all stand before

Acts 10. 42.

the Judgment-seat of Christ, both Small and Great. Power shall not exempt the Kings of the Earth and the great Men, neither shall mean-

Rev. 6. 15.

ness excuse the poorest Slave; for they are all the work of his Hands; neither will he have regard to such Qualities and Circumstances of Persons, which do not at all appertain to the Merits of the Cause.

Job 34. 19.

Q. For

Q. For what shall we be judged?

A. For all things we have done in the Body, ^{2 Cor. 5. 10.} *whether they be good or bad. All our Thoughts, Words and Actions shall then undergo the severest Scrutiny; for they being all in some Measure subject to God's Laws, they shall then be examined as to the Breach or Observance of them; we must then give an Account how we have performed our Duty to God, our Neighbour, and our selves, how we have improved the Talents we have been intrusted with; particularly we shall be tryed for the Omissions of our Duty, that being the main Inquiry recorded in the Procedure of that great Day. And not only our Actions, but every idle, that is wicked,* ^{Mat. 25. 42, &c.} *word we shall speak will be brought into Judgment, and by our words we shall be justified, and by our words we shall be condemned; nay, our secret Thoughts shall then be exposed to publick View, for all Wickedness takes its rise from the Heart, and the Design and Intention with which a thing is done, frequently discriminates the Goodness or Evil of the Action, therefore God shall judge the Secrets of Mens Hearts by* ^{Mat. 12. 36.} *Jesus Christ.* ^{Rom. 2. 16.}

Q. By what Measures shall the Sentence of the Great Day pass upon Men?

A. According to the Nature and Quality of their Actions. The wicked shall go into everlasting Punishment, but the righteous into Life eternal. ^{Mat. 25. 46.} *So that the Rewards and Punishments of the next Life shall bear a Proportion to the Good or Evil Men have done in this.*

Q. But will the Degrees of their good and bad Actions be considered, as well as the Nature and Quality of them?

D

A. The

A. The Scripture is plain and exprefs in this
 Luke 12. Matter. *To whomsoever much is given, of him*
 48. *shall be much required. He that soweth spa-*
 2 Cor. 9. 6. *ringly, shall reap sparingly, and he that soweth*
bountifully, shall reap bountifully. And in the
 Parable of the Talents, our Saviour plainly
 teaches us that Men are rewarded according to
 Luke 19. the Improvements they make. He that had
 16, &c. gained Ten Talents is made Ruler over Ten
 Cities, and he that had gained Five Talents, Ru-
 1 Cor. 15. ler over Five Cities. St. Paul expressly affirms,
 41. that the Glory of the Saints shall be different at
 the Resurrection. And our Saviour tells us, that
 in the *Day of Judgment* the Condition of *Tyre*
and Sidon, of *Sodom and Gomorrah* shall be more
 tolerable than that of *impenitent Sinners* under
 the Gospel. And this is agreeable to the Justice
 and Equity of God's Providence, and to the Rea-
 son of the thing, nothing being a greater Incite-
 ment to Piety than the Consideration, that the
 least Service shall not lose its Reward. And the
 better any Man is, the greater Disposition he
 has for the Enjoyment of God; and the more
 hardened he is in Wickedness, the more suscepti-
 ble he is of Torment, and treasures up greater
 Measures of Wrath against the Day of Wrath.

Q. *What is the prefixt Time of our Saviour's coming to Judgment?*

A. The Time and Season for that great Affize
 is appointed by God, and reserved as a Secret to
 Mar. 13. 32. himself. *Of that day and hour knoweth no Man,*
no, not the Angels which are in Heaven, neither
the Son, but the Father. The Angels who excel
 in Knowledge, and shall administer in all the
 Solemnities of the last Judgment are ignorant
 of it, and so is the Son of Man, who is himself

to be the Judge, and who as God knows all things, yet as to his humane Understanding he did not know it ; which is not unreasonable to suppose, if we consider that the humane Nature of Christ did not necessarily know all things by Virtue of its Union to the Divine Nature; other-ways Jesus could not have *grown in Wisdom* and Luke 2.52, *Favour with God and Man.*

Q. What shall be the Manner and the Circumstances of Christ's Appearing ?

A. He shall be revealed from Heaven with his 2 Thes. 1.7. *mighty Angels; He shall descend with a shout,* 1 Thes. 4. *with the Voice of the Arch-Angel, with the Trump* 16. *of God. He shall come in his own Glory, and in* Luke 9. 26. *his Father's, and in that of his holy Angels. He shall sit upon the Throne of his Glory, and all* Mat. 25. 31; *Nations shall be gathered before him, and he shall* 32. *separate them, the one from the other, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats. Those that sleep in the Grave shall awake, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, and they that* 1 Thes. 4. *are alive shall be changed and caught up to meet* 17. *the Lord in the Air; which sufficiently shews* 1 Cor. 15. *the glorious appearing of the great God, and our* 51. *Saviour Jesus Christ. Glorious in respect of* Tit. 2. 13. *the Brightness and Splendour of his Celestial Body, still made more Glorious and Majestick by the Authority which his Father has committed to him of Universal Judge. Glorious in his Retinue, being accompanied with thousands of holy Angels, who shall attend not only to make up the Pomp of his Appearance, but as Ministers of his Justice; and Glorious lastly in that bright Throne of Glory, from whence he shall dispence Life and Death to all the World.*

Q. *What may we learn from the Certainty of a future General Judgment?*

A. To govern our Lives with that *Care* and *Consideration*, and with that due regard to the Measures of our Duty, that we may be able to give up our Accounts with Joy, and not with Grief. To keep that strict *watch* over our selves by frequent *Examination*, that our Demeanour in this state of Probation and Trial, may obtain the Favour and Acceptance of our Judge at his dreadful Tribunal. To *restrain* our selves from committing the *least Sin*, because there is none so inconsiderable as to be overlook'd at that general Audit. Not to *incourage* our selves by the greatest Secrecy to the Breach of any of God's holy Laws, because all our Actions shall be then exposed to publick View, and known by the whole World, to our eternal Infamy and Reproach. Not to be dejected by the Slanders and Calumnies of bad Men, because our Integrity shall then be cleared by him who cannot err in Judgment. To *improve* all those Talents the Providence of God hath intrusted us with, because we are but Stewards and must give an Account of them. To be *sincere* in all our Words and Actions, because in that Day the Secrets of all Hearts shall be disclosed. To *avoid* all *rash judging* of others, because he that judgeth another shall not escape the Judgment of God. To *abound* in such Works as we know will particularly distinguish Men at that Day, as feeding the Hungry, cloathing the Naked, &c. because our Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. And yet after the most careful and industrious performance of our Duty, to be *humble* and *jealous* over our own Conduct; because
tho'

tho' we know nothing by our selves, we are not thereby justified, for *he that judgeth us is the Lord.* 1 Cor. 4. 4.

Q. What should we learn from the Uncertainty of the Time when we shall be judged?

A. Immediately to reconcile our selves to God by a sincere and hearty Repentance, that the terrible Day of God's Wrath may not find us unprepared. To be always upon our Guard, that we may make a daily Progress towards Christian Perfection, and constantly defend our selves against the Attacks of our Spiritual Enemies. To be frequent in all Acts of Piety and Devotion, that when we are summoned to appear, we may, if possible, be found employed in religious Exercises. To beg God's Grace that the Day of Judgment may not overtake us unawares, but that by a patient Continuance in well-doing we may wait for Glory, Honour and Immortality.

The PRAYERS.

I.

A Almighty God, give me Grace, that I may cast away the Works of Darkness, and put upon me the Armour of Light, now in the Time of this mortal Life, (in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great Humility) that in the last Day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty to judge both the Quick and Dead, I may rise to the Life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the Holy Ghost now and ever. *Amen.*

II.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy Messenger to prepare thy way before thee; Grant, that the Ministers and Stewards of thy Mysteries, may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the Hearts of the Disobedient to the Wisdom of the Just; that at thy second coming to judge the World, we may be found an acceptable People in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, World without end. *Amen.*

III.

O Lord, raise up, I pray thee, thy Power and come among us, and with great Might succour me, that whereas through my Sins and Wickedness, I am sore lett and hindred in running the Race that is set before me, thy bountiful Grace and Mercy may speedily help and deliver me, thro' the Satisfaction of thy Son our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be Honour and Glory, World without end. *Amen.*

IV.

Ep. Ken.

I Believe, O Blessed Jesus, that from thy Throne at God's right Hand, where thou now fittest, thou wilt come again to judge the World, attended with thy holy Angels. I believe, O thou adorable Judge, that all Mankind shall be summoned before thy awful Tribunal; all the *Dead* who shall be wak'd out of their Graves, when the Angel shall blow the last Trump, and all that are then *quick* and alive, shall then appear before thee. That I and all the

the World shall give a strict Account of all our Thoughts, Words and Actions, that the Books will be then opened; that out of those dreadful Registers we shall be judged, that Satan and our own Consciences will be our Accusers. O let the last Trump be ever sounding in my Ears, that I may ever be mindful of my great Accounts; and that I may neither speak, nor do, nor think any thing that may wound my own Conscience, or provoke thy Anger, or make me tremble at the awful Day. I know, O Lord, that Love only shall then endure that terrible Test, that Love only shall be acquitted, that Love only shall be eternally blest; and therefore I will ever praise and love thee. Glory be to thee, O thou beloved Son of God, to whom *the Father has committed all Judgment*. How can they that love thee, O Jesu, ever despond, tho' their Love in this Life is always imperfect, when at last they shall have Love for their Judge, Love that hath felt and will compassionate all their Infirmities; and therefore all Love, all Glory be to thee. *Amen.*

C H A P. III.

Saint Andrew. November 30.

Q. **W**hat Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?

A. That of the Apostle St. Andrew.

Q. Of what Parantage and Country was he?

A. He was born at Bethsaida, a City of Galilee. John 1. 44.

lilee, standing upon the Banks of the Lake of *Gennesareth*, Son to *Jonas*, a Fisherman of that Town; and Brother to *Simon Peter*. 'Tis not decided by the *Ancients*, whether he was elder or younger, the major part think *St. Andrew* to have been the younger.

Q. *How came our Saviour to chuse his Disciples out of Galilee?*

A. Because it was the chief *Scene* of our Saviour's Ministry; a Circumstance noted by all the *Evangelists*; and *St. Peter* also stamps it with his Character in his Sermon to *Cornelius*,
 Acts 10. 37. Luke 1. 26. Mat. 2. 23. 4. 13, 23. John 2. 11. *the Word which began from Galilee.* Our Saviour was both conceived and brought up at *Nazareth*, a City of *Galilee*; he began his solemn Publication of the Gospel at *Capernaum*, the *Metropolis* of *Galilee*; he preached all round the Region of *Galilee*; he began his Miracles at *Cana* in *Galilee*; he was transfigured at *Mount Tabor*, a Mount of *Galilee*; our Saviour's ordinary Residence was in *Galilee*; and he appoints his Disciples to come to see him in *Galilee* when he was risen from the Dead.

Q. *Was our Saviour's vouchsafing his principal Abode to the Province of Galilee any Testimony of his being the Messiah?*

A. The Prophecy of *Isaiah* 9. 1, 2, 3. plainly relates to this matter; and to this purpose it is quoted by *St. Matthew*, when our Saviour made *Capernaum* the Seat of his Preaching. The Land of *Galilee*, or of *Zebulun* and *Neptali*, had the misfortune to be first in that Calamity which befall their Nation by the *Assyrian*; by occasion of which Calamity then newly hapned, *Isaiah* comforts them with this Prophecy; that in recompence of that Misery they suffered above the

rest of their Brethren, they should have the first and chiefest share of the Presence and Conversation of the *Messiah* that was to come.

Q. *How was St. Andrew awakened to expect the Messiah?*

A. By being a Disciple of St. *John the Baptist*, John 1. 40. who trained up his Profelytes under the Discipline of *Repentance*, which prepared them to entertain the Doctrine of the *Messias*; whose approach he told them was near at hand, representing to them the greatness of his *Person*, and the importance of the *Design* he was come upon.

Q. *How came St. Andrew acquainted with our Saviour?*

A. Being with *John the Baptist* one day as *Jesus* passed by, and hearing him say, that he was *the Lamb of God that takes away the Sins of the World*, he follows our Saviour upon this Testimony to the place of his Abode; hearing his Instructions, and improving his Faith by conferring with him; upon which account by several of the *Ancients* he is stiled the *first called Disciple*, though in a strict sense he was not so; for though he was the first of the Disciples that came to Christ, yet he was not called till afterwards.

Q. *What was the first effect of his Faith in the Messiah?*

A. He went to his Brother *Simon*, and imparted to him the joyful News, that he had found the *Desire of the World*, and their long expected Happiness, the *Christ* who was promised by the Prophets, and carried him immediately to *Jesus*; where after a short stay they returned again to their own Houses, and exercised their Calling.

Q. *When*

Q. When did St. Andrew become our Saviour's Disciple and constant Attendant.

A. About a Year afterwards, when being fully convinced of the Greatness and Divinity of our Saviour's Person, by the miraculous Draught of
Mat. 4. 18. Fishes, our Saviour commanded him, with his Brother *Peter*, to follow him, designing to make them *Fishers* of Men; who accordingly left all and constantly attended our Saviour's Person, and was afterwards called by him to the Office and Honour of the Apostolate.

Q. What became of St. Andrew after our Saviour's Ascension?

Socra. Hist. *A.* It is generally affirmed by the *Ancients*,
Eccl. lib. 1. that the *Apostles* agreed among themselves, by
C. 19. Lot, say some, probably not without the special Guidance and Direction of the *Holy Ghost*, what parts of the World they should severally take:
Euseb. lib. And that in this Division *St. Andrew* had *Scythia*,
3. c. 1. and the neighbouring Countries, allotted him for his Province.

Q. How and where did St. Andrew suffer Martyrdom?

A. After this blessed *Apostle* had planted the Gospel in several places, and by his indefatigable Labours had converted many to the Faith; he came at last to *Patra* in *Achaia*, where by laying down his Life, he confirmed the *Truths* he had taught. For by endeavouring to convert *Ægeas* the *Pro-Consul* of *Achaia*, and to preserve his new Converts from *Apostacy*, which the Governour strove to reduce by all Arts to their old Idolatry, he enraged the *Pro-Consul* against him; who commanded him to be scourged, and then to be crucified; and that his Death might be more lingring, he was fasten'd to the *Cross*, not with *Nails*, but with *Cords*.

Q. What

Q. What account is there of the Manner of his Crucifixion ?

A. That as he was led to Execution, he shewed a chearful and compos'd Mind, and that being come within sight of the Cross, he saluted it with this kind Address: *That he had long expected and desired that happy Hour; that the Cross had been consecrated by bearing the Body of Christ. That he came joyful and triumphing to it, that it might receive him as a Disciple and Follower of him who once hung upon it; and be the means to carry him safe unto his Master, having been the Instrument upon which his Master did redeem him.* Having prayed and exhorted the People to Constancy and Perseverance in their Religion, he was fastned to the Cross, whereon he hung two Days, teaching and instructing the People all that time; and when great Importunities were used with the *Pro-Consul* to spare his Life, he earnestly begg'd of our Lord, that he might at this time depart, and seal the Truth of Religion with his Blood, which accordingly happened.

Q. What was the Form of St. Andrew's Cross ?

A. The Instrument of his *Martyrdom* is commonly said to have been something peculiar, in the form of the Letter X, being a Cross decussate, two pieces of Timber crossing each other in the middle; and hence usually known by the Name of St. Andrew's Cross.

Q. What became of his Body ?

A. Being taken down from the Cross, it was embalmed, and decently and honourably interr'd by *Maximilla*, a Lady of great Quality and Estate. Afterwards it was removed to *Constantinople*

Hiero. ad-
ver. Vigi-
lan. to. 2.
P. 41.

tinople by *Constantine the Great*, and buried in the great Church, which he had built to the Honour of the Apostles.

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. To labour what we can in our Station to make all our Relations, Friends and Dependents, true Followers and Servants of the blessed Jesus; to shew our Dislike of any Evil that reigns among them, and courageously to reprove what we know deserves it; to venture the promoting their eternal Welfare, tho' at the danger of their Displeasure: To lay hold on all favourable Opportunities to insinuate the Necessity and Happiness of being Religious: To prepare our Minds by Mortification and Repentance for the receiving all those heavenly Graces which are enjoined in the Gospel-Institution: To bear all the Afflictions and Calamities of this Life with a patient and courageous Mind, entirely resigned to the Will of God: Cheerfully to take up the Cross, and to rejoice when we are counted worthy to suffer for the Name of Jesus; that *when his Glory shall be revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding Joy.*

1 Pet. 4. 13.

Q. When may Men be said to suffer really for the sake of Jesus, or for the Cause of Religion?

A. Not only when they suffer rather than renounce the *Christian Religion*, or the publick Profession of it; but when they suffer for any necessary Point of *Faith* or *Practice*, wherein the *Essence* or *Purity* of the *Christian Religion* is concerned; and when they suffer rather than disclaim any undoubted *Truth* of God whatsoever,

Q. How

Q. How does the Providence of God bear good Men out in such Sufferings ?

A. Either by securing them from those violent Degrees of Temptation ; which would be too strong for humane Strength and Patience ; or in case of extraordinary Tryals, by giving them the extraordinary Supports and Comforts of his *Holy Spirit* ; either by not suffering them to be tempted above what they are able, or with the Temptation, by making a way for their escape.

Q. When may we in our Sufferings for Religion, expect with Confidence the particular Support of God's Providence ?

A. When we are careful to perform our own *Duty*, and do what is required on our part. And when neither to avoid Sufferings, or to rescue our selves out of them, we do any thing contrary to our Christian Obligations and a good Conscience. 'Tis an eternal Rule from whence we must in no Case depart. *That Men must do nothing contrary to the Rules and Precepts of Religion, no not for the sake of Religion it self ?*

Q. With what Temper of Mind ought good Men to suffer for the Cause of Religion ?

A. With *Patience*, that they may not grow faint and weary ; with *Meekness*, that they may not grow angry and bitter against their Persecutors ; with *Charity*, that they may overcome Evil with Good ; with *trust in God's Providence*, that they may be supported under their Sufferings by his *Grace*, and delivered in his good Time ; with *Joy and Thankfulness*, in as much as they are Partakers of Christ's Sufferings, and when his Glory shall be

be revealed, will be made glad with exceeding Joy.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

A Almighty God, who did'st give such Grace to thy holy Apostle *St. Andrew*, that he readily obey'd the calling of thy Son *Jesus Christ*, and followed him without delay; Grant unto me and all Christians, that we being called by thy holy Word, may forthwith give up our selves obediently to fulfil thy holy Commandments, thro' the same *Jesus Christ* our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

O God merciful Father, that despisest not the Sighing of a contrite Heart, nor the Desire of such as be sorrowful; mercifully assist our Prayers that we make before thee, in all our Troubles and Adversities whensoever they oppress us; and graciously hear us, that those Evils which the Craft and Subtlety of the Devil or Man worketh against us may be brought to nought, and by the Providence of thy Goodness they may be dispersed, that we thy Servants being hurt by no Persecutions, may evermore give Thanks unto thee in thy Holy Church, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord. *Amen.*

III.

Mr. Kettlewel.

O Blessed *Jesus*; who in thy wise Providence thinkest it fit sometimes to call thy faithful Servants to bear their Cross, and to suffer for thy sake, who didst suffer a most ignominious

nious Death for them; bring me not to suffer, till thou hast fitted and prepared me for it; and lay no more upon me, than thou wilt enable me willingly and thankfully to endure. Let me not rashly expose my self to Danger without thy Call, nor suffer for my own Fancy or Folly, or for any wilful or affected Error. Give me Grace to live according to the Rules of my most holy Faith, that I may have Courage and Comfort in suffering for it. Preserve me stedfast in the Belief of thy heavenly Truths, and undaunted in the Profession of them. Give me Patience to bear my Cross, and Meekness to bear my Persecutors; Charity to forgive their Wrongs, and to pray to thee for their forgiveness. Enable me to trust in thy Goodness for Support and Deliverance, and to fix my Faith upon those heavenly Joys, with which the Sufferings of this Life are not worthy to be compared; that being made Partaker of thy Sufferings, I may be glad with exceeding Joy when thy Glory shall be revealed. To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory World without end. *Amen.*

IV.

O Almighty Lord, who hast purchased to thy self a Church *with thine own Blood*, look in Mercy upon the same, however distressed throughout the World. Pity all its Calamities, and in thy due time give it a happy Deliverance out of them. Keep it in thy Truth, and preserve it from Heresies and false Doctrines either about Faith or Practice, and from Schisms that tear it in pieces. And when thou art pleased to try it with Tribulations, let them only
purge

purge it, but not lay it waste. Revive a suffering Spirit among all the Members of it when it labours under a suffering state; that they may be ready to quit all worldly Interest, and be enabled contentedly and joyfully to take up the Cross and bear it after thee, that carefully avoiding all Ways of Error and Wickedness, for preventing or rescuing themselves from Sufferings, they may either be delivered by thy mighty Arm, or rewarded in thy heavenly Kingdom, where with the Father and the Holy Ghost thou livest and reignest one God World without end. *Amen.*

C H A P. IV.

Saint Thomas. December 21.

Q. *What Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?*

A. That of St. Thomas the Apostle.

Q. *What was he called besides Thomas?*

A. *Didymus*; which according to both the Greek and Syriac Sense of his Name, signifies a Twin; as *Thomas* also doth amongst the Hebrews. It being customary with the Jews, when travelling into foreign Countries, or familiarly conversing with Greeks and Romans, to assume to themselves a Greek or a Latin Name of great affinity, and sometimes of the very same signification, with that of their own Country.

Q. *Of what Country and Kindred was this Apostle?*

A. The

A. The History of the Gospel takes no particular notice of either. That he was a Jew is certain, and probably a Galilean, and 'tis very likely, that as to his Trade he was a Fisherman; for when St. Peter, after our Saviour's Resurrection, thought fit to return to his former Profession of Fishing to relieve his present Necessities, Thomas bore him Company. John 21. 2.

Q. After he was called to be an Apostle, what proof did he give of his willingness to adhere to our Saviour?

A. When the rest of the Apostles dissuaded our Saviour from returning into Judæa, (whether he was resolved to go for the raising his dear Friend Lazarus lately dead) lest the Jews should stone him, as they had before attempted, St. Thomas desires them not to hinder Christ's Journey thither, tho' it might cost their Lives. Let us also go that we may die with him, saith he; probably concluding, that instead of raising Lazarus from the dead, they themselves should be sent with him to their own Graves. John 11. 8, &c.

Q. How did our Saviour treat the slowness of St. Thomas's Understanding; who, when our Saviour a little before his fatal Sufferings, speaking to his Disciples of the Joys of Heaven, and of his going to prepare a place for them, profest that he knew not whither he went, much less the Way that led to it? John 14. 5.

A. With the Mildness and Gentleness that is proper to be used to a well-disposed Mind, in a short but satisfactory Answer; that He was the true living Way, the Person whom the Father had sent into the World, to shew Men, by his Doctrine and by his Example, the Paths of Eternal Life; and that they could not miss of Heaven,

ven, if they did but keep to that Way which he had prescribed.

Q. What may we learn from the foregoing Particulars?

A. That where the Mind is rightly disposed, and the Affections bent towards Heaven, we ought to bear with the heaviness of the Understanding, and to endeavour with Gentleness and Patience to infill that Knowledge which is necessary to make Devotion perfect. And that the doing that Will of God which we know, is the best Qualification to attain greater Degrees of Knowledge; since we are assured by our Saviour,
 John 7. 17. *that he that doth God's Will, shall know of the Doctrine, whether it be of God.*

Q. What proof did St. Thomas require of our Saviour's Resurrection?

A. The Testimony of his own Senses; for tho' the rest of the Apostles assured him, they had really seen their Master alive again, yet he
 Joh. 20. 25. *profest, except he should see in his Hands the print of the Nails, and thrust his Hand into his side, he would not believe. A strange piece of Infidelity, after he had seen our Saviour's Miracles, and had so long convers'd with him, who had frequently asserted in plain terms, that he must rise again the third Day.*

Q. How did our Saviour cure this his Infidelity?

A. Compassionating the weakness of St. Thomas, and willing to satisfy the Doubts and Scruples of sincere tho' ignorant Men, he ap-
 v. 28. *peared to his Disciples again, when St. Thomas was with them, and gave him the satisfaction he desired; who being quickly convinced of his Error, acknowledged him to be his very Lord*
 and

and Master, a God Omnipotent, thus able to rescue himself from the Powers of Death.

Q. *What Reply did our Saviour make to this Profession of St. Thomas's Faith?*

A. That he did well to believe upon this Testimony of his Senses; but that it was a more noble and commendable Act of Faith, to acquiesce in a *rational Evidence*, and to entertain the Doctrines and Relations of the Gospel upon such assurances of the Truth of things, as are fit to satisfy a wise and sober Man, tho' he did not see them with his own Eyes. V. 29.

Q. *Of what Advantage is this Act of St. Thomas's Infidelity to us Christians?*

A. It confirms our Faith in our Saviour's Resurrection, and convinces us beyond all doubt or scruple, by the most sensible Evidence, that the very same Body of our Lord was raised, in which he suffered.

Q. *Where did St. Thomas preach the Gospel?*

A. The Province allotted to him for the exercise of his Apostolical Office was Parthia; he published the glad Tidings of Salvation to the Medes, Persians, Carmanians, Hyrcani, Badrians. Some of the Ancients relate how he met with the Magi; to whose Country they belonged who brought Presents to our new-born Saviour, that he baptized several of them, and made use of them as his Assistants in propagating the Gospel; that he passed through the Asian Ethiopia, and at last came to the Indies, as is proved by ancient Tradition, and several Marks still preserved among those People to this Day. Euseb. lib. 3. c. 1.

Q. *How are the Christians in that part of India called?*

Brerewood's
Enquir. c.
20.

A. The Christians which inhabit the more Southerly part of the great Promontory, whose Base lies between the Outlets of the Rivers *Indus* and *Ganges*, are called the *Christians* of *St. Thomas*, because supposed to be Converted by his Preaching. Before the *Portuguese* frequented those parts, they were esteemed to be about Fifteen or Sixteen Thousand Families. They had then no dependence upon the *Bishop* of *Rome*, but denied his Primacy. The Sacrament was administred among them in both kinds: They celebrated it with Bread, seasoned with Salt; and instead of Wine, which their Country affords not, they made use of the Juice of Raisins, softned one Night in Water, and then pressed forth. They baptized not their Infants till they were Forty Days old, except in danger of Death. They used not extreme Unction. They had no Images in their Churches, but only the Cross. And their Priests were excluded from second Marriages.

Q. *How is it thought St. Thomas suffered Martyrdom?*

A. Having converted many to the Faith in *India*, and among the rest the Prince of the Country; the *Brachmans* perceiving this would spoil their Trade, resolved to put a stop to his successful Progress, and conspired his Death. And one Day, when our *Apostle* was retired without the City of *Malopur* for his private Devotions, they assaulted him with armed Men, first loading him with Darts and Stones, and then one ran him through with a Lance.

Q. *What became of his Body?*

A. It was by his Disciples buried in a Church which he had lately caused to be built in the fore-

fore-mentioned City And tho' some say it was afterwards translated to *Edeffa*; yet the Christians in the *East* constantly affirm it to have remained in the place of his *Martyrdom*.

Q. *What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?*

A. That provided our *Minds* sincerely intend *God's Service*, and that our *Affections* are fix'd upon him as our chiefest good, he will compassionate the *weakness* of our *Understandings*, and either pardon our *Errors*, or deliver us from them. That the best method to procure *Divine Light*, is to practise what we know to be *God's Will*. That no *Dangers* should discourage us from adhering to our *Blessed Master*, and that even *Death* it self should not be able to separate us from him. That *Faith* ought to be the prevailing Principle of a Christian, under all *Events*, and in every Condition of human *Life*; and that tho' it is a degree of assent inferiour to *Sense*, yet the *Acts* of it are much more praise-worthy and commendable; *Blessed are they which have not* Joh. 26:29 *seen, and yet believe.*

Q. *How is Faith made the prevailing Principle of a Christian Life?*

A. By governing all our *Thoughts*, *Words* and *Actions*, with a regard to another *World*, and by a firm persuasion of absent and invisible things; as the *Belief* of a *God*, and his *Providence* that orders all things, and of his invisible *Grace* ready at hand to assist us in all that is good; and to keep us from all *Evil*; especially when in all our *Ways* we have a regard to the *Promises* of *Everlasting Life*, and the *Threatnings* of *Eternal Misery*; which was the great Principle of the *Piety* and *Vertue* of all good Men from the

beginning of the World, as the Apostle to the
 Heb. II. *Hebrews* declares at large.

Q. Wherein consists the Power of this Principle?

A. In that the Objects of *Faith* are fitted to work upon our Minds upon the account of both the *certainty* and the *concernment* of them. We have all the Assurance of the Truth of them that we are capable of in this Life, from the Dictates of Reason, and the general Consent of Mankind; besides that, to assure us these Reasonings are true, we have a most credible *Revelation* of these things in the *Gospel* of our Saviour; who gave a sensible Proof of his Divine Mission in his *Resurrection* from the Dead. And as to the *Importance* of them, every one must own that the highest Hopes and the greatest Fears are sufficient Springs of human Actions; for what can concern us more than Eternal Happiness and Eternal Misery?

Q. What is meant by Faith in Christ?

A. In general it is the believing all those things that are *declared* to us by *Christ*; and more particularly some things that are *declared* of him. The *believing what is said by him* is called *Faith in Christ*, as his Authority and Credit is the Ground and Reason of our Belief. And the *believing things said of him* is called *Faith in Christ*, as he himself is the Object of it. And when this Belief suitably affects us, and we resolve and practise so as may reasonably be expected from Persons under such Persuasions, then it is imputed to us for Righteousness.

Q. What are those Properties that fit Faith to produce such suitable Effects?

A. It must be *real* and *unfeigned*, against the Pretences

Pretences of those that use it only as a disguise to be trusted ; or as a meer outside Profession, without looking for any farther Reason than to be in the Fashion. It must be *heartly* and *affectionate* ; not a meer speculative Opinion, as of things wherein we are not much interested ; but a moving and influencing Persuasion, wherewith all the Powers of the Soul are affected. It must be *assured* and *confident* ; for a wavering and uncertain Opinion will not accomplish its Work. Men will not run Ventures and bear Losses on uncertain Hopes, but only on firm and certain Expectations. It must be *honest*, and accompanied with a good *Conscience*, implying a Man's Integrity in discharging the Profession he makes, and Honesty in performing his Undertaking. It must be *resolute*, and fully fixt, after all things are well considered ; so that when any Hardships arise, we may not be soon staggered in our Minds.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

A Almighty and Everlasting God, who for the more confirmation of the Faith, didst suffer thy holy Apostle *Thomas* to be doubtful in thy Son's Resurrection ; Grant me so perfectly, and without all doubt, to believe in thy Son Jesus Christ, that my Faith in thy sight may never be reprov'd. Hear me, O Lord, through the same Jesus Christ, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all Honour and Glory now and for evermore. *Amen.*

II.

Almighty and Everlasting God, give unto me the increase of Faith, Hope and Charity; and that I may obtain that which thou dost promise, *make me heartily to believe what thou hast revealed*, and to love that which thou dost command, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

III.

LORD of all Power and Might, who art the Author and Giver of all good things; assist me by thy Grace, that I may mortifie all the inordinate and corrupt Inclinations of my Heart, which oppose the Belief of thy holy and heavenly Truths. Enable me to conquer my evil Habits, and govern my unruly Passions, that they may not indispose my Mind in embracing that Evidence, which so plentifully accompanies thy Divine Revelations to the Sons of Men. Let not the scandalous Divisions among Christians, nor the ill Lives of those that profess thy holy Religion, ever stagger or weaken my Belief of it, since Love and Peace and Unity are Marks of thy true Disciples; and that thy Wrath is revealed from Heaven against all those that obey not the Gospel of thy Son. Keep my Mind free from all Prejudice, which puts so false a Byass upon the Understanding, even in Matters of the greatest Importance, and which may prove so fatal and destructive to my Eternal Welfare; that seeing the Reasonableness of those things thou hast required, the Perfection of those Duties thou hast enjoined, and the Power and Force of those Motives upon which both are founded, I may be stedfast and unmoveable, and at last receive the
end

end of my Faith, even the Salvation of my Soul,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

IV.

O Holy and Eternal God! who hast graciously
condescended to establish with Christians
a Covenant of Faith and Obedience, with the Pro-
mises of a present supply of Grace and Assistance,
and of a future Reward to crown all those that
persevere in thy Service. O let me for ever dwell
upon this Rock; that while I am surrounded
with sensible things, I may not be shaken by the
power of them. That no Charms of present sin-
ful Pleasures, may make me forget that Place of
Torment to which they consign me. That the
cares of this Life, and the deceitfulness of Riches,
may never make me neglect a Treasure that fail-
eth not, an Inheritance with the Saints in Light.
Work in me all those godly Affections that may
make my Faith effectual to my Salvation. Let
the belief of thy Paternal Care over me, produce
Love, Honour, and dutiful Obedience; of thy
Almighty Power, Reverence and godly Fear; of
thy Righteousness, Holiness in all manner of
Conversation; that Faith being the governing
Principle of my Life, it may compose my Mind
under all Events, by a firm Trust and Confidence
in thy wise Providence; and that it may dispel
all Solitude for worldly Supplies, by a settled
persuasion, that thou wilt withhold no good
thing from them that walk uprightly, and that
thou art ready to bestow good things if we per-
severe in Prayer and Devotion; that ordering all
my Actions with a regard to another World, I
may so pass thro' things temporal, that I finally
lose not the things eternal, thro' Jesus Christ our
Lord. *Amen.*

CHAP.

C H A P. V.

**The Nativity of our Lord, or
the Birth-Day of CHRIST,
commonly called Christmas-
Day. December 25.**

Q. *What Festival does the Church celebrate
this Day?*

A. The *Great Festival* of the Nativity of our Saviour Jesus Christ; or the Appearance of God in the Flesh.

Q. *What Authority have we for the Observation of this Festival?*

A. The Practice of the *Primitive Church*; for tho' we have no certain Evidence of the *exact* time when it was first observed, yet it appears plainly that it was very early received all over the *West*. And the immemorial Observation of it, is an Argument of its primitive Institution.

Q. *But is it not superstitious to observe this Festival upon the twenty fifth of December; when we cannot be certain that our Saviour was born upon that Day?*

A. There is little Reason to doubt, but that this which we now observe is the very Day. The Testimony of *St. Chrysostom* is clear for the Tradition of it. Tho' if the Day were mistaken, the matter of the Mistake being of no greater moment, than the false Calculation of a Day, will certainly be very pardonable in those who think they are not mistaken. And as long as those, who are supposed to be in this Error, do perform

Chrysost.
Tom. 5.
p. 467.

perform the Business of the Day with as much Piety and Devotion on a mistaken Day, as they could do on a true one, if they certainly knew it, the excuse of blameless Ignorance will wash away greater Errors than this of the Day, supposing it were an Error.

Q. What are we to believe concerning the Birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ?

A. That the *Virgin Mary*, espoused unto *Joseph of Nazareth*, who before and after her espousals was a pure and unspotted Virgin, being and continuing in the same Virginity, did by the immediate Operation of the *Holy Ghost*, conceive within her Womb the only begotten Son of God; and after the natural time of other Women brought him forth. Whereby the Saviour of the World was born of a Woman made under the Law, without the least pretence of any Original Corruption, that he might deliver us from the Guilt of Sin. And he was born of a *Virgin* of the House and Lineage of *David*, that he might sit upon his Throne, and rule for evermore.

Q. Was the promised Messiah to be born after a miraculous manner?

A. Yes; the Prophecies of the Old Testament foretold as much. *Jeremiah* says, *The Lord Jer. 31.22. hath created a new thing upon the Earth, a Woman shall compass a Man.* That new Creation of a Man is therefore *new*, and therefore a *Creation*, because wrought in a Woman only without a Man. *Isaiah*, *Behold a Virgin shall conceive, Isa. 7. 14. and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel.* The original Word was translated a *Virgin*, by such Interpreters as were *Jews* themselves, some Hundred Years before our Saviour's Birth. And did not the signification of the Word, and the frequent

frequent use thereof in Scripture import it; the Wonder of the Sign given by the Lord himself would evince as much. As for that Conceit of the *Jews*, that all should be fulfilled in *Hezekiah*, it is so manifestly false, that nothing can make more for the Confirmation of our Faith.

Cyrl. Hiero.

catec. 4.

S. 10.

2 Kin. 16. 2.

This Sign was given, and this Promise made at some time in the Reign of *Ahaz*. Now *Ahaz* reigned but sixteen Years in *Jerusalem*; and his Son *Hezekiah*, who succeeded him, was twenty 18. 2. five Years old when he began to Reign; and therefore born several Years before *Ahaz* was King, and consequently not now to be conceived when this Sign was given.

Q. How does it appear these Prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus Christ?

Luke 1. 34.

Mat. 1. 25.

A. His Mother that bore him was a pure Virgin, as appeared both from her own Account, and that of *Joseph* her reputed Husband; both Persons of known Integrity and unquestionable Credit. When *Joseph* doubted of her Chastity, an Angel was dispatched to clear her Honour, and to assure him that what was conceived in her, was not any humane Production, but of the Holy Ghost. When she objected the impossibility of her being a Mother, the Angel explains it to her self, by the Holy Ghost coming upon her, and the Power of the Highest over-shadowing her. All which was so unquestionable, and plainly made out to the Apostles and Primitive Christians, that they universally and firmly believ'd it, and thought it a point of so great moment, as to deserve a place in that Summary of the Christian Faith, call'd the Apostles Creed.

Q. What were the Circumstances of our Saviour's Birth?

Mich. 5. 2.

A. He was born at *Bethlehem*, according to the

the Prediction of the Prophet *Micah* ; whither *Joseph* and *Mary* went in Obedience to the Decree of *Augustus* to be taxed, being of the House and Lineage of *David* ; the Providence of God making use of this Conjunction, by verifying a Prophecy, to signify and publish the Birth of the true *Messias*. The concourse of People to *Bethlehem*, was so great, that they could find no Accommodation but a Stable ; where the Blessed Virgin brought forth her first-born Son, wrapp'd v. 7. him in swaddling Cloaths and laid him in a Manger ; doing her self the Offices of a pious and tender Parent, whilst all the Angels of God worshipp'd him. Heb. 1. 6.

Q. How was the Birth of our Saviour published to the World ?

A. By the Administration of Angels ; for as certain Shepherds were keeping watch over their Flocks by Night, the Angel of the Lord came Luke 2. 9. upon them, and the Glory of the Lord shone round about them ; so that the Splendor of the Appearance confounded their Senses and made them sore afraid ; but the Angel quickly dissipated the Terror that seized them, with the Tidings he brought of great Joy to all the People ; v. 10, 11. in those comfortable words, unto you is born this Day, in the City of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord.

Q. How were the Shepherds directed to find this new-born King ?

A. Left they should expect a Prince accompanied with outward Pomp and Magnificence, the Angel describes the Meanness and Obscurity of his Circumstances, as a Token to guide them in the search of this new-born Prince. This shall be Luke 2. 12. a sign unto you, ye shall find the Babe wrapp'd in

in swaddling Cloaths and lying in a Manger. Upon this Notice the Shepherds without delay went to Bethlehem, and found the Narrative verified; and published to the World both what they had seen and heard concerning the Holy Child Jesus.

Q. How was this joyful News received by the Angels and the Shepherds?

A. The multitude of the heavenly Host praised God in that devout Hymn, Glory to God in the Highest, and on Earth Peace, Good Will towards Men. And the Shepherds, when they had found the real Completion of what was told them by the Angel, returned glorifying and praising God.

Q. Since this Angelical Hymn has been retained in the Offices of the Church ever since the primitive time of Christianity; what may we understand by it?

A. That the Blessed Angels excited one another, to give Glory and Praise to God for his wonderful Works towards the Children of Men. That 'tis our constant Duty to acknowledge his Majesty and Greatness, those peerless Prerogatives of Power, Wisdom and Goodness; which appeared with the greatest Lustre in the stupendious Incarnation of the Son of God. That Christ has taken away the Enmity between Heaven and Earth, and reconciled Man to God; for God's good Will to favour Men, is the Peace the Angels congratulate; hence the Gospel is call'd the Gospel of Peace, and God so often in the New Testament the God of Peace. And since the Children of Men alone partake in these Wonders of Love, they ought continually to joyn with the heavenly Host in glorifying and praising God.

Q. What

Eph. 6. 15.
Rom. 15.
33.

Q. *What may we learn from the Circumstances of our Saviour's Birth, and the Publication thereof?*

A. It ought to reconcile us to a state of Poverty: For since the *Blessed Jesus* chose to be born in so mean and obscure a manner, and preferred it before the Splendor and Pomp of the Rich and Great, the Poor ought to bear a low Condition with Patience and Contentedness, and the Rich not to undervalue and contemn it. In publishing the News of his Birth our Saviour passed by the *Wise* and the *Powerful*, and revealed it to the *poor Shepherds*; he manifests it Luke 2. 8. to them by an *Angel*, and makes them the Instruments of communicating the Knowledge of it to the Rich and Great. God *incarnate* preaches the Gospel to the Poor; and mean illiterate *Fisher-men* are employed to preach it to the *Kings* and *Sovereigns* of the Earth. And if ever the Rich attain Happiness they must be *poor in Spirit*, Mat. 5. 3. and fit loose to what they enjoy. 17.

Q. *What Expectation was there in the World about this time of the Messias's appearing?*

A. The *Jews* were in a general Expectation of him, as appears from the *ancient* and general Tradition received from the School of *Elias*; that at the end of the second two thousand Years the *Messias* should come. And likewise from that particular Computation of the *Jewish Doctors*, not long before our Saviour's coming; who upon a solemn Debate of that Matter, did determine the *Messias* would come within fifty Years. And this is confirmed from the great jealousy which *Herod* had concerning a King of the *Jews* that was expected to be born about that time. And from the Testimony of *Josephus*, who tells us, Lib. 7. c. 12.
the

the Jews rebelled against the Romans, being encouraged thereto by a celebrated Prophecy in their Scriptures, that about that time a famous Prince should be born among them, that should rule the World.

Q. *Was the Gentile World in any Expectation of such an Appearance?*

A. Yes; this is evident from the famous Testimonies of two eminent Roman Historians, *Suetonius* and *Tacitus*. The former says, *There was an ancient and general Opinion famous throughout all the Eastern parts, that the Fates had determined that there should come out of Judæa those that should govern the World.* Which words seem to be a verbal Translation of that Prophecy in *Micah*, *that out of Judah should come the Ruler.* *Tacitus's* Testimony is, *That a great many were possessed with a persuasion, that it was contained in the ancient Books of the Priests, that at that very time the East should prevail, and that they who should govern the World were to come out of Judæa.* Which phrase that the *East should prevail*, refers to that Title given the *Messias* by the Prophet *Zachariah*; where he is called the *Man whose Name is the East*; for tho' we translate it *Branch*, yet the *Hebrew* word signifies both; and may be rendered the one as well as the other.

Q. *What was the great Advantage of our Saviour's Appearing in the World?*

A. The scattering and dispelling that Cloud of Idolatry, and that Corruption of Manners which had fatally over-spread it. So that the most contemptible Objects were thought worthy of divine Honours; the *Jews* themselves having at one time as many Gods as *Cities*; and the

the most brutish and scandalous Vices prevailed, not only among the most polish'd part of Mankind, but even in the solemn Acts of the *Gentile Worship*. Upon which Account our Saviour became a light to lighten the Gentiles, as he was the Glory of his People Israel. So that under the conduct of such a Guide, we cannot fail of acquiring the Knowledge of God's Will in this World, and the comfortable expectation of Life everlasting in the World to come.

Q. Wherein did our Saviour exceed all those that had before him, made known the Will of God to Mankind?

A. In the Dignity and Excellency of his Person, whereby he knew the best and surest ways of attaining Happiness. In the clearness and perfection of his Precepts. In the brightness of his own Example; and in the encouragements of gracious Assistances and glorious Rewards he has promised to all those that engage and persevere in his Service.

Q. How was our Saviour qualified by the Dignity of his Person to reveal to us the Will of God?

A. He who lay in the bosome of the Father, John 1. 8. and had the Spirit communicated to him without measure, in whom dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily, could not want a perfect Knowledge of what was most agreeable to the divine Will; and consequently we have abundant reason to put our Trust and Confidence in that method of attaining Salvation he has discovered, because it was the contrivance of infinite Wisdom, and cannot fail of success, if we are not wanting to our selves in heartily embracing it.

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Q. Where-

Q. Wherein consists the perfection of his Doctrine?

- A. In that it directs us to the true Object of Worship, and gives us rational and worthy Notions of that Being we are obliged to adore; and is most fitly adapted to raise our Natures to the greatest improvement they are capable of. To prevent our falling into sinful Actions, our Saviour lays a restraint upon our thoughts which lead to them, and obliges us to govern*
- Mat. 5. 28. our looks which give birth to our thoughts. To obviate all those Evils which proceed from an inordinate desire of Riches, he has discovered to us that admirable Temper of Mind distinguished in his Gospel by Poverty of Spirit, which makes us even set loose to the good Things we possess. To keep us at a distance from the Temptations of Lying and Detraction,*
- Mat. 12. 36. he has forbid all idle words, that the care to avoid them might secure us from falling into those greater faults. To hinder the fatal effects of Anger and Revenge, he has nipp'd these Passions in the bud, by commanding us to love our*
- V. 44. Enemies, and to do Good to them that do Evil to us. To facilitate the Vertue of Patience, so necessary in this Vale of Tears, he has manifested to us the Treasures that are hid in Adversity, and the advantage of being persecuted for his sake; that what the World calls Misfortune and Calamity, often proves the blessed Occasion of making us Happy both in this Life*
- V. 4. and the next. Blessed are they that mourn, blessed are they that are persecuted. And to make us quiet and easie in our selves, and gentle to others, he requires us to have a quick sense of*
- Mat. 11. 29. our own Weaknesses and Defects, and readily*

to condescend to the lowest Offices for the good of our Neighbours.

Q. Wherein appears the Brightness of our Saviour's Example?

A. In that he hath set us a perfect Pattern of all those solid and needful Vertues which he requires from us, and in his own Person has recommended to us the most hard and difficult, as well as those that are most useful and beneficial. To teach us *Piety* and *Devotion* he frequently retired, and spent whole Nights in Prayer; and from worldly Occurrences raised matter for spiritual Thoughts, and conformed not only to divine Institutions, but to humane Appointments that tended to promote Religion. That we might learn *Humility*, this Prince of Glory condescended to the Poverty of a Stable; this Wisdom of the Father became dumb, and was reduced to the simplicity of an Infant; he spent thirty Years of his Life in Retirement, unknown to the World, and was subject to his Parents. That we might be ready to exercise universal *Charity* to the Bodies and Souls of Men; the whole course of his Life was employ'd in doing good. That we might suppress all *ambitious Desires*, he refuses the offer of the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them; and when the People would have made him a King, he silently withdrew, and they knew not where to find him. That we might be *obedient to Government*, he pays Tribute, tho' he was free from any such Obligation, and was forced to work a Miracle to perform it. That we might *live above the World*, he chose to have no part nor share in the Possessions of it, the Son of Man not having where to lay his Head.

Mat. 14. 23.
Luke 6. 12.

Joh. 10. 22.

Luke 2. 7.

Acts 10. 38.

Mat. 4. 8,

Mat. 17. 24,

25, &c.

Mat. 8. 20.

And tho' he denied himself in the lawful Pleasures and Satisfactions of Life, yet he was perfectly *contented* in his mean Condition. That in all our Sufferings we might be *resigned* Mat. 26. 39. *to the Will of God*; in his bitter Agony he renounced the strongest Inclination of Nature, and submitted to the appointment of his Father. That a regard to the *judgment* of the *World* might not prevail upon us to transgress the Laws of God, *he made himself of no Reputation*; and in order to do good to Mankind, was contented to be esteemed one of the worst of Men; a Magician, an Impostor, a Friend and Companion of Publicans and Sinners, and a Seducer of the People. That we might resist all Temptations to Anger, and preserve an *evenness of Mind* under all *Provocations*, he bore with the dullness and slowness of his Disciples, both in their understanding and believing what he plainly taught; and answered the sharpest Reproaches of his Enemies with calm Arguments, and modest Silence. That we might practice that difficult Duty of *loving our Enemies*, he prayed most earnestly for his, even when he felt the most cruel Effects of their Malice, and imputed it to their Ignorance.

John 14.
5, &c.

Joh. 10. 32.

Luk. 23. 34.

Q. What Encouragements has our Saviour promised to excite us to the performance of our Duty?

A. He offers *Pardon and Forgiveness* of what is past, and perfect Reconciliation to God by the Merits of his Death and Passion, provided we return to him by sincere Repentance. He supplies us with *strength* at present to enable us to do our Duty, by enlightning our dark Minds, by exciting our Wills to that which is Good,

Good, and by raising our Courage under Difficulties and Dangers. He alarms our Fears by the threatnings of eternal Punishment in the next Life; and encourages our Hopes by the Promises of everlasting Rewards to the whole Man, both Body and Soul; which are the most powerful Considerations in the World to take Men off from Sin, and to bring them to Goodness.

Q. What Thoughts are proper to entertain our Minds upon this Festival?

A. Great Admiration of the *stupendious Love of God* towards Mankind; in sending no less a Person than his *own Son*, and no less dear to him than his *only begotten Son*, out of his meer Grace and Goodness to accomplish our Salvation; who were Enemies to God by our evil Works. Great Thankfulness to the *Blessed Jesus*, for his wonderful *Humility and Condescension*; when he undertook the Work of our Redemption. He who lodged in the *Bosom of his Father*, came into the World, and *had not where to lay his Head*. He who had *Heaven* for his *Throne*, was contented to be *born in a Stable*, to be *laid in a Manger*, to be *wrapp'd in swaddling Cloaths*. Great Transports of Gratitude; that for our sakes, he would be pleased to be made miserable, that we might be made happy; to be poor, that we might be enriched; to die, that we might live for ever. Great Trust and Confidence in the Mercy of God, who has shewed such *Tenderness and Compassion* towards us, and has done such great things for our Salvation.

Q. How ought we to express our Thankfulness for the Incarnation of our Blessed Saviour?

A. We ought to joyn with the heavenly Host and the pious believing Shepherds in *Hymns of*

Praise and Thanksgiving. To comply with the
 Tit. 2. 12. great Design of this wonderful Love, *by denying all ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and by living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.* To propound this Pattern of Love for
 1 Joh. 4. 11. our own Imitation, and *because God has so loved us, to love one another*; and to stoop to the lowest Offices of Charity for the Relief of our Neighbour. Never to despise the Poor for the meanness of their Circumstances, since 'tis what our Saviour chose for our sakes, but to cherish and assist them as his lively Representatives here upon Earth; especially because all the Kindness we shew to them, he reckons as done to himself.

Q. *How ought we to express our Love to the Blessed Jesus for this wonderful Condescension?*

A. By earnestly labouring to please him to the
 Joh. 14. 15. utmost of our Power, in a constant Care *to keep his Commandments*, and endeavouring to prevail upon others to do the same. By making a daily Progress in Piety and Vertue, that we may be conform'd to the likeness of that beloved Object. By setting a great Value upon all Ways and Opportunities of conversing with him; in praying and meditating, in hearing his Word and receiving the blessed Tokens of his Love, which he has left us in the *Holy Sacrament*. By being more concerned to hear his Holy Name blasphemed, than for any Reproach that can be cast upon our selves. By longing for his glorious Appearing, that we may enjoy him without Interruption to all Eternity.

Tit. 2. 13. on our selves. By longing for his glorious Appearing, that we may enjoy him without Interruption to all Eternity.

Q. *How is the Observation of this Festival abused?*

A. When instead of making it an Instrument of Religion, we chiefly employ this *holy Season*

in Vanity and Folly; when our Joy evaporates in Extravagance, and degenerates into Sin and Sensuality; when we express it by Luxury and Intemperance, to the great scandal of our Saviour and his Holy Religion; it being the improperest Season, (if there can be any one more so than another) for Impiety and Wickedness, and a most notorious aggravation of it; because contrary to the design of our Saviour's coming into the World, *who was made manifest that he might destroy the Works of the Devil.* 1 John 3. 8.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

A Almighty God, who has given us thy only begotten Son, to take our Nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin; Grant that I being regenerate and made thy Child by Adoption and Grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, ever one God World without end. *Amen.*

II.

O God, whose Blessed Son was manifested that he might destroy the works of the Devil, and make us the Sons of God and Heirs of Eternal Life; Grant, I beseech thee, that having this Hope, I may purifie my self even as he is pure; that when he shall appear again with Power and great Glory, I may be made like unto him in his glorious Kingdom; where with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost,

Ghost, he liveth and reigneth one God World without end. *Amen.*

III.

IT is very meet, right, and my bounden Duty, that I should at all times and in all places, give Thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty Everlasting God. Because thou didst give Jesus Christ thy only Son to be born as at this time for us; who by the operation of the Holy Ghost was made very Man of the Substance of the Virgin *Mary* his Mother, and without spot of Sin, to make us clean from all Sin. Therefore with Angels and Arch-Angels, and with all the Company of Heaven, I laud and magnifie thy Glorious Name, evermore praising thee and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, Heaven and Earth are full of thy Glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most High. *Amen.*

IV.

GLory be to God on High, and in Earth Peace, Good Will towards Men. I praise thee, I bless thee, I worship thee, I glorifie thee, I give Thanks unto thee for thy great Glory, O Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord the only begotten Son Jesu Christ, O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that wert made Man to take away the Sins of the World, have Mercy upon me, by turning me from my Iniquities: Thou who wert manifested to destroy the Works of the Devil, have mercy upon me, by enabling me to renounce and forsake them: Thou that art the great Advocate with the Father for the Sins of the World, receive my Prayer. For thou only art Holy, thou

thou only art the Lord, thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost art most high in the Glory of God the Father. *Amen.*

V.

WHat am I, dear Lord, that thou shouldst leave the Right-hand of God, and come to visit me? Hadst thou no ease in thy own Breast, so long as I lay plung'd in Misery? How camest thou, being so highly exalted, and the Eternal Son of God, to have any affectionate concern at all for me? Was I not a deformed polluted Wretch, and thy profest Enemy? And were not either of these enough to turn away thy Face from me? But if notwithstanding all this, thy overflowing Goodness would put thee upon doing something for my sake, why must thou come thy self upon Earth, and be subject to the Miseries of Humane Nature, and to the Affronts of an ungrateful World, to bleed and die to redeem me? How unfathomable is thy Grace, and what an unsearchable depth of Love is this which thou hast opened to us? O! how happy do I think my self in it, and how doth my Heart rejoice at the remembrance of it! Lord! I love thee dearly, and long to love thee more: Would I had the Heart of the *Seraphin*, that I might be all over Love, and feel my Soul affected to that degree which I desire and thou infinitely deservedst of me: I wish no greater Pleasure than to be found perfect in thy Love, and to have thee so dear to me, that I may condemn all the gilded Vanities and Allurements of this World at the thoughts of it. O! that thou wouldest fill me, if that might be, with an Affection full and absolute, like thy own, that so I might

I might love thee infinitely, as I am beloved by thee. At least possess me with such a Sense of thy Love, and such Thankfulness for all thy Favours, as is somewhat worthy of thee: Though should I offer the utmost Acknowledgments, which the most affected and enlarged Heart can pay, I should not give thee the thousandth part of what I owe thee. Let all the Angels adore thy glorious Goodness, and all the Sons of Men, so long as they have a Tongue to speak, set forth thy noble Praise; for thou, O sweetest *Jesu*, art the Son of the Blessed, the Joy and Glory of the World, the Lamb of God, the Saviour of Mankind, who wast slain for our sakes and art alive again, and sittest now for ever at the right Hand of Power, in the Glory of the Father, that Angels may submit to thee, and all the World may worship thee and praise thy Goodness, Power and Glory to all Eternity. *Amen.*

C H A P. VI.

Saint Stephen. December 26.

Q. *What Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?*

A. That of the first Martyr *St. Stephen?*

Q. *What account is there of the Country and Kindred of this holy Man?*

Acts 7.

A. The Scripture gives us no particular notice of either. That he was a *Jew* is unquestionable, he owns this in his Apology to the People; but whether

whether born at *Jerusalem*, or among the dispersed in the *Gentile* Provinces, is impossible to determine. Antiquity reckons him, and that probably enough, among the *seventy* Disciples; and indeed his admirable Knowledge in the Christian Doctrine, and his singular Ability in proving *Jesus* to be the *Messias*, argue him to have been trained up under our *Saviour's* immediate Institutions for some considerable time.

Q. *What Character do the Scriptures give us of St. Stephen?*

A. They describe him as a Man full of Faith Acts 6. 5. and the Holy Ghost; which imply that he had great Zeal and Piety, and that he was endowed with extraordinary measures of that Divine Spirit that was lately shed upon the Church, and thereby peculiarly qualified for that place of Honour and Usefulness he was advanced to.

Q. *What Function did St. Stephen exercise in the Church?*

A. The Office of a Deacon, which had its Acts 6. Original upon the murmuring of the Grecians, who were probably Proselytes, Jews by Religion, and Gentiles by Descent; against the Hebrews, who were Jews both by Religion and Birth; that their Widows were neglected in the daily Ministrations, when Believers had all things V. 12. in common, and were supplied out of one Treasury: To prevent any Mismanagement for the future, the Apostles appoint seven Men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and of Wis- Acts 6. 3. dom, to superintend the Necessities of the Poor, to make daily Provision for their publick Feasts, and to keep and distribute the Treasure of the Church; of which St. Stephen was one; whereby the Apostles had more leisure to attend those Affairs

Affairs that were more immediately serviceable to the Souls of Men.

Q. *Tho' the Care of the Poor was a main part of the Deacon's Office, was it the whole?*

A. No: For had this been all, the *Apostles* needed not have been so exact in their Choice of Persons, nor have used such solemn Rites of Consecration to ordain them to it. But the *serving Tables* implied also their Attendance at the Table of the *Lord's Supper*; for in those Days their *Agape* or Love Feasts, where Rich and Poor sat down together, were at the same time with the *holy Eucharist*; and both administered every Day; so that their Ministration respected the one and the other, and thus we find 'twas in the Practice of the Primitive Church afterwards; besides they were allowed to Preach and Baptize, as is plain

Acts 8. 12. by Philip the Deacon, who did both.

Q. *How were the first Deacons ordained to their Office?*

A. Seven Men of good Report, full of Wisdom and the *Holy Ghost*, were by the People presented to the *Apostles*; who first made their Address to Heaven for a Blessing upon their Undertaking, and then laid their Hands upon them; an ancient *Symbolick Rite* of Investiture and Consecration to any extraordinary Office.

Q. *Who were those that opposed and disputed with St. Stephen?*

A. Several of the Members of five Synagogues, of which there were very many at Jerusalem, established for expounding the Law and for Prayer. In some Apartments joining to these, were Schools or Colleges for the Instruction and Education of Youth; which being built by Jews

Acts 6. 9. Y. 10. who were *Foreigners*, were called after the Name of

of their *Countries*. But notwithstanding their Subtilty and Learning, they were not able to resist the *Wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake*.

Q. Being baffled in this Attempt, what Method did they take to suppress the Doctrine he taught ?

A. They suborned Men of profligate Consci- V. 11.
ences to undermine him by false Accusations; that so he might fall a Sacrifice to their Spight and Malice, and that by the Hand of publick Justice.

Q. What did the false Witnesses deposite against him ?

A. That they had heard him speak blasphemous Words against Moses, and against God. That he should threaten the Ruine of the Temple, and V. 13, 14;
the Abolition of the *Mosaick Rites*; and blasphemously affirm that *Jesus of Nazareth* should take away that Religion, which had been established by *Moses*, and by God himself.

Q. What was the Summ of St. Stephen's Defence ?

A. That if they look'd back to their Fore-Father Abraham, they would find that God chose Acts 7.
him to be a Father of the Faithful, when he lived among *Idolatrous Nations*; and that he served God acceptably without those external Rites they laid so great stress upon. And when he entered into Covenant with him, he made use of no Ceremony but that of *Circumcision*; and that without any other fix'd Rite but this, the succeeding *Patriarchs* worshipp'd God for several Ages, till the time of *Moses*, who was appointed by God to conduct them out of the House of Bondage, who had foretold, that God would V. 37.
raise up to them a Prophet like unto him, and
that

that they should bear him. That when their Fathers lapsed into *Idolatry*, God commanded *Moses* to set up a *Tabernacle*, as a place of publick Worship ; which after some Years gave place to a standing Temple, designed by *David* but built by *Solomon* ; which tho' stately, was not absolutely necessary from the nature of that infinite Being they worshipp'd. And that therefore there could not be that Necessity for those *Mosaick* Rites they pretended ; especially since they were designed to last but for a Time ; but that it was their refractory Humour, as it
 v. 51. had been their Ancestors, to resist the Holy Ghost, and to persecute and slay those Prophets that foretold the coming of the *Messias*, the Holy One, of whom they had been the Betrayers and Murderers, without any regard to that Law he came to fulfil.

Q. *How did the Judges bear his Defence?*

A. They express'd all signs of Rage and Fury, their Consciences being stung with the Truths he delivered ; which prevented the Application he designed to make. However regardless of their Resentment, he fixed his Eyes and Thoughts upon
 Acts 7. 56. on Heaven, and saw the *Glory of God*, and *Jesus* standing at the right hand of God ; the affirming of which made his Adversaries now take it for granted that he was a *Blasphemer* ; and thereupon resolve his Death without any farther Process.

Q. *How did St. Stephen suffer Martyrdom?*

A. He was stoned ; which was one of the four Punishments among the *Jews* inflicted for great and enormous Crimes ; as *Blasphemy*, *Idolatry*, &c. the Witnesses, whose Hands were to be first upon him, putting off, according to Custom, their

their upper Garments, laid them down at *Saul's* Feet, while the holy *Saint* was upon his Knees V. 60. recommending his Soul to God, and praying for his Murtherers, that the Guilt of his Death might not be laid to their Charge; and in this manner copying the Example of his Master, *he fell asleep*. The miraculous Conversion of *St. Paul*, was a Proof of the Efficacy of his dying Prayers; and of that gracious Favour with which God was pleased to hear him.

Q. What became of his Body?

A. It was carried by devout Men to be buried, who from a sense of the loss of so pious and good a Man, *made great Lamentation for* Acts 8. 2. *him.*

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. That a firm Belief and Persuasion of another Life, is the great support of a good Man under the Sufferings of this. That when Malice and Cruelty combine to deter Men from the Profession of the Truth, by inflicting the most barbarous Torments, the good Providence of God often makes them ineffectual by assisting his faithful Servants with an extraordinary Communication of his Grace. That no Opposition nor Calumny from bad Men should discourage Christians from doing all the Good they can. That we ought to summon up all our Courage and Resolution, when we are engaged in the Defence of God's Cause; always remembering that Patience and Moderation best become the Advocates of Truth. That tho' good Men, when they die, depart into a state of Happiness, yet they are a loss to the World which we may justly lament, being deprived of the Advantages
of

of their edifying Example. That we should be ready to forgive all the Injuries and Affronts we receive from others, and by practising it in ordinary Provocations, to prepare our selves for the Exercise of it in greater. That if we will distinguish our selves to be the Disciples of *Jesus*, we must love our *Enemies*, bless them that curse us, pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us, a perfection of Charity peculiar to the Gospel Institution, in which St. *Stephen* copied the Example of his blessed Master, which we might have thought impossible to have been imitated, if the *Saint* of this Day had not convinced us of the contrary.

Q. Since the Love of Enemies is a Duty peculiar to the Christian Institution, wherein does it consist?

A. In bearing a sincere Affection towards them, tho' they are malicious and implacable to us; and in being ready upon occasion to give real Testimony of it.

Q. Is it not enough to wish them no Evil, and to do them no Harm?

A. Many devout *Christians* delude themselves in this matter; for besides these Expressions of *Justice*, we are obliged to shew them all Offices of *Charity*; because they are Men and *Christians*, our Neighbours and our Brethren. We ought to honour them for their Vertues, and pity them for their Miseries, to relieve their Wants, to conceal their Defects, and to vindicate their injured Reputation, to pray for them and be placable towards them; ready to remove all Misunderstandings, and to make such steps as may probably recover them to a true sense of things.

Q. What

Q. *What is that Uncharitableness to our Enemies we are most liable to?*

A. *Hard Censures, and Suspicions, fancying the worst Designs, and putting the worst Interpretation upon all their Words and Actions; a reigning Sin among Adversaries; too common among those who are otherwise serious and devout; and this not only against particular Persons, but on all hands against whole Bodies and Parties, who in any thing relating to the Times, are of different Opinions. Now this is contrary to the nature of Charity, which is always inclinable to think the best, and leans so far as the thing will bear to the side of Favour, both in judging and speaking of all their Actions. It is also plainly contrary to our Lord's Rule, who warns us not to judge, that we be not judged, because Mat. 7. 1, 2. with what measure we mete, it will be measured to us again.*

Q. *What makes it so hard to forgive our Enemies?*

A. It is our dwelling upon an Injury received, and hearkening to ill Suggestions, that aggravate the Deed, and the Malice and Unworthiness of him that offered it. This heightens our Resentment, and makes it difficult to bring our Minds into Temper; whereas if when such Thoughts arise, we did not harbour nor give way to them, we should find Forgiveness much more easie.

Q. *What Obligations do we lie under to the performance of this Duty?*

A. The *express Command* of our Saviour, the Mat. 5. 44. Author of our holy Religion, requires it from us. 6. 14, 15. He has besides made *Forgiveness* of Injuries to be the Condition without which we can expect no Pardon of our Sins from him: He has in his own

Person set us a *Pattern* of this Vertue, which he practised to the height, rendring Good for Evil to all Mankind?

Q. Wherein consists the Reasonableness and Excellency of this Duty?

A. In that it tends to the Comfort and Happiness of our Lives; Patience and Forgiveness affording a lasting and solid Pleasure. In that it restrains at present a very tumultuous and unreasonable Passion, and prevents many Troubles and Inconveniences, which naturally flow from a malicious and revengeful Temper. It is the Perfection of Goodness to do Kindnesses not only without Merit and Obligation, but in despite of Temptation to the contrary. It is an Argument of a great Mind, and the most valuable Conquest, because gained over our selves. And thus God himself is affected towards those who are guilty of the greatest Provocations against him.

Q. But is not the Repentance of the Party that injures us, made the Condition of our Forgiveness?

A. Forgiveness is chiefly taken for abstaining from Revenge; and so far we are to forgive our Enemies, even whilst they continue so, and tho' they do not repent. Besides, we are to pray for them, and do them all Offices of common Humanity and Charity. But sometimes Forgiveness does signifie a perfect Reconciliation to those that have offended us, so as to take them again into our Friendship; which they are by no means fit for, till they have repented of their Enmity, and laid it aside; and this is the meaning of that Text; *of rebuking our Brother if he trespass against us, and if he repent to forgive him.*

Luke 17.3,
4.

Q. How

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Q. How are we to treat an Enemy that repents?

A. We are not obliged to treat him with Marks of *special Esteem* and *Confidence*, because this is founded upon particular Reasons and fitness of Persons, as *likeness of Humour*, *fidelity of Affection*, *aptness for our Affairs*, or the like. But when we our selves are only concerned, and the thing is not of that weight as to be jealous over it, and we have no other Cause but that Offence to exclude him from it; 'tis a Christian Act to admit a returning Penitent to the same state he held before he offended us. And this is according to St. Paul's Direction, *to forgive others, even as Christ forgives us.* Eph. 4:32.

Q. By what Measures ought we to judge of the Repentance of our Enemies?

A. We ought not to be too *strict* and *rigid* in standing upon exact Proofs, but to be *candid* and apt to interpret all Signs of it to the best sense, leaning to the side of Love and easie Admittance. If they take Shame to themselves, and are so far humbled, as penitently to confess their Fault, 'tis an Argument of their Sincerity, and in the case of the first Offence especially, a strong presumption that they will no more commit it.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

GRant, O Lord, that in all our Sufferings here upon Earth for the Testimony of thy Truth, I may stedfastly look up to Heaven, and by Faith behold the Glory that shall be revealed,

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and

and being filled with the Holy Ghost, may learn to love and bless my Persecutors, by the Example of thy first Martyr *St. Stephen*; who prayed for his Murtherers to thee, O blessed Jesus, who standest at the Right Hand of God, to succour all those that suffer for thee, our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

II.

Almighty God, who hast given us thy only begotten Son to take our Nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin; grant that I being regenerated and made thy Child by Adoption and Grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, one God, World without end. *Amen.*

III.

Teach me, O blessed Jesus, to lay aside all angry and revengeful Thoughts against my bitterest Enemies, because thou requirest it; and hast shewn me the way by thy own perfect Example; who tookest pity upon fallen Man when he was in a state of Enmity against thee; and without Importunity or Application didst admit him to Terms of Pardon and Reconciliation; and didst pray for thy Persecutors under the Sense and Smart of those Sufferings they inflicted, in the very Agony and Bitterness of Death. Teach me therefore to bear all their Malice with Meekness and Patience, and to return all Offices of Charity for the Affronts and Indignities they offer to me. Make me placable and ready to forgive, and candid in interpreting all the Marks
and

and Signs of their Repentance. And do thou, O blessed Jesus, forgive them and recover them to a right sense of things, and make them ready to be reconciled; that I being enabled by thy Grace to tread in the Steps of thy first Martyr *St. Stephen*, may receive that Pardon from thee, which I readily grant to them; and without which I am undone to all Eternity. Grant this, O Lord Jesus, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, World without end. *Amen.*

IV.

GRACIOUS God, shew Mercy, I humbly intreat thee, to all those that persecute me, tho' they neither shew Justice nor Mercy towards me: Pity their Ignorance, remove those Prejudices that blind their Eyes, sweeten and mollifie their Spirits, that they may no longer be carried away with Malice and bitter Passions: Dispose them by Humility and Meekness, and by a sincere Love of Truth and Righteousness, to a joyful Reception and Acknowledgment thereof; that they may lay aside their Errors, and instead of persecuting, resolutely profess thy holy Religion. And by whatever means thou shalt think fit to work their Recovery, let their Repentance prevent thine Eternal Vengeance, through the Merits of our dearest Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *amen.*

C H A P. VII.

St. John the Evangelist.
December 27.

Q. *What Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?*

A. That of St. John the Evangelist.

Q. *What was St. John's Original?*

A. As to his Country he was a *Galilean*, the Son of *Zebedee* and *Salome*, younger Brother to St. *James*, with whom he was brought up in the Trade of Fishing, and with whom he was called to be a Disciple and an Apostle of our Saviour. He is thought by the *Ancients* to be far the youngest of all the Apostles, being under *thirty* years old when he was first called to that Dignity. And his great Age seems to prove as much, for dying near a hundred Years old in the third of *Trajan*, he must have lived about *seventy* Years after our Saviour's Sufferings.

Q. *What new Name did St. John receive from his Master?*

A. He with his Brother *James* were stiled *Boanerges*, that is, the *Sons of Thunder*. This Sur-name is thought more especially to be attributed to St. *John*, because he so clearly taught the Divinity of *Jesus Christ* in sublime Words, and delivered the *Mysteries* of the Gospel in a profounder Strain than the rest of the *Evangelists*; upon which account he is affirmed by the *Ancients*, not so much to speak as to thunder.

Q. *What particular Marks had St. John of our Saviour's Effcem?*

A. He

A. He was not only one of the three Disciples which our Saviour admitted to the more private Passages of his Life, but was *the Disciple* Joh. 13. 23. whom Jesus loved; who lay in our Saviour's Bosom at the Paschal Supper, the most honourable place of being next him; who was made use of by St. Peter, as the Disciple most familiar with our Saviour, to enquire whom he meant, when he said, *one of them should betray him*; V. 24. and to whom our Lord committed the Care of John 19. his Mother, the *Blessed Virgin*, when he was 26, 27. leaving the World.

Q. What may we learn from this?

A. Our Saviour has by his Example and Authority sanctified the Relation of *Friendship*, and those closer Bands of Amity, which natural Affection or special Inclination may form between particular Persons, without any prejudice to a general Charity.

Q. How did St. John shew his Sense of this particular Kindness of, our Saviour towards him?

A. By Returns of Kindness and Constancy; staying with him when the rest of the Disciples deserted him. To this Cause may be attributed his Zeal to punish the *Samaritans* that affronted his Lord; and perhaps also, his desire to sit on our Saviour's Right Hand in his Kingdom, that he might have a nearer Enjoyment of him in his Glory. And hence likewise, tho' upon the Surprise of our Saviour's Apprehension, he fled with the rest of the Apostles; yet he quickly recovered himself, and confidently enter'd into the *High Priest's Hall*, and followed our Saviour through the several Stages of his Trial, and at last attended upon him at his Crucifixion, own-

ing him, as well as being owned by him, in the thickest Crowd of his most inveterate Enemies; and having received the *Blessed Virgin* into his House, according to our Saviour's Recommendation, he treated her with Duty and honourable Regard; and made her a principal part of his Charge and Care.

Q. *With which of the Apostles did St. John seem to have the greatest Intimacy?*

A. With St. Peter. Upon the News of our Saviour's Resurrection, they two hastened together to the Sepulchre. 'Twas to Peter that St. John gave the notice of *Christ's appearing* at the Sea of *Tiberius* in the Habit of a Stranger; and it was for St. John that St. Peter was solicitous what should become of him. After the Ascension of our Lord we find them both together going up to the Temple at the Hour of Prayer; both preaching to the People, and both apprehended and thrown into Prison, and the next Day brought forth to plead their Case before the *Sanhedrim*. And both sent down by the Apostles to *Samaria* to settle the Plantations *Philip* had made in those parts, where they baffled *Simon Magus*.

Q. *What other Particulars do the Scriptures mention concerning St. John?*

A. Nothing more than what is recorded of him in Conjunction with his Brother *James*; upon whose Festival they are taken notice of.

Q. *Where did St. John exercise his Apostolical Office?*

A. The Province that fell to his share was *Asia*. Tho' 'tis probable he continued in *Judea* till after the *Blessed Virgin's Death*; which is reckon'd to happen about fifteen Years after our Lord's

Euseb.
lib. 3. c. 1.

Lord's *Ascension*, otherwise we must have heard of him in the Account St. Luke gives of St. Paul's Journeys into those parts. He founded the Churches of *Smyrna*, *Pergamos*, *Thyatira*, *Sardis*, *Philadelphia*, *Laodicea*; but his chief place of Residence was *Ephesus*; where St. Paul had many Years before settled a Church. Neither is it thought he confined his Ministry merely to *Asia Minor*; but that he preached in other parts of the *East*; probably *Parthia*, his first *Epistle* being anciently intitled to the *Parthians*.

Q. How was St. John persecuted by the Emperor Domitian?

A. He was represented to the Emperor as an eminent Asserter of Atheism and Impiety, and a publick Subverter of the Religion of the Empire. By the Emperor's Command the *Pro-Consul* of *Asia* sent him bound to *Rome*, where he received a very barbarous Treatment, he was cast into a *Cauldron of boiling Oil*, or rather Oil set on fire; but the Divine Providence, which secured the *three Hebrew Captives* in the Flames of a burning Furnace, brought this holy Man safe out of what one would have thought an inevitable Ruin.

Tertul de
Præf. Hær.
c. 36.

Q. How was he farther treated by the Emperor?

A. *Domitian* being disappointed, considered not the Miracle; but presently orders him to be banish'd into the Island of *Patmos* in the *Archipelago*; where he remained several Years instructing the Inhabitants in the Faith of Christ. This banishing into *Islands* was the worst and severest kind of Exile, whereby the Criminal forfeited his Estate; being transported into some certain

certain *Island*, which only the *Emperor* had the power of naming, there to be confined to perpetual Banishment.

Q. *Did St. John die in Banishment?*

A. No, the *Emperor Nerva* revoked the severe *Edicts* of his Predecessor, and *St. John* took the advantage of that Indulgence, and returned to *Ephesus*; where finding *Timothy* their Bishop martyr'd, he governed that Church till the time of *Trajan*; about the beginning of whose Reign he departed this Life; being near a *hundred* Years old, and never married. As to the Reports of his being translated without dying, or that he only lay sleeping in his Grave, they are Errors built upon that Discourse that passed between our *Lord* and *St. Peter* concerning this Apostle.

Joh. 21. 21.

Q. *What was Remarkable in St. John's Conduct towards the Heretick Cerinthus?*

A. Going with some of his Friends to the Bath at *Ephesus*, and understanding that *Cerinthus* was at the same time bathing, he immediately retired, exhorting his Friends to avoid a place where was so great an Enemy to the Truth, lest the Bath should fall upon their Heads. This Account is given by *Irenaus*, as a Tradition from *Polycarp*, *St. John's* Scholar and Disciple.

Iren. adv.
Hær. lib. 3.
c. 3.

Q. *What Writings did this Apostle leave behind him?*

A. His Gospel, three Epistles, and his Book of Revelation.

Q. *How does it appear, that St. John wrote the Gospel that goes under his Name?*

Joh. 21. 20.
21, 22, 23,
24.

A. The Gospel it self describes the Author of it by such Marks as peculiarly belonged to *St. John*; as that he was a Disciple of our *Lord*, and

and that Disciple whom Jesus loved; and of whom the Fame went abroad among the Brethren, that he should not die. That St. John was the beloved Disciple, appears by several places in this Gospel, and the whole Christian Church has distinguished him by that Character; and his not dying was so constantly applied to St. John, that some of the Ancients declared he died not at all, but was translated; and others, that he only lay sleeping in his Grave: And he alone, of all the Apostles, tarried till our Lord came to the Destruction of Jerusalem; which he outlived many Years. To this we may adjoin the Testimony of the Primitive Church, which asserts it as an unquestionable Truth. Irenæus says, That John, the Disciple of our Lord, who leaned upon his Breast, writ his Gospel at Ephesus. Clemens of Alexandria, That St. John inspired by the Holy Ghost, composed this spiritual Gospel. Origen reckons it among the Gospels received without dispute by every Church under Heaven. Eusebius places it among the Books not controverted among Christians, and as known to all the Churches of the World. And the ancient Hereticks, that ascribed it to Cerinthus, were guilty of a great absurdity: For how could those things be writ by Cerinthus, which do in direct Terms contradict his Doctrine? He asserted that Christ was born as other Men, and but a meer Man himself; whereas the Author of this Gospel declares Christ to be the Word, which in the beginning was with God, and was God, and is expressly affirmed by Antiquity to be writ on purpose to remove that Error which Cerinthus had dispersed in the World. All which Evidence taken together, makes it undeniable, that

Joh. 13. 23.
19. 26.
21. 7.

Lib. 3. c. 1.

Euseb. Hist.
Eccl. lib. 6.
c. 14.
Ibid. lib. 6.
c. 25.

Lib. 3. c. 24.

Epiphani.
Har. 51.
§. 4.

John 1. 1.

that St. *John* was the Author of that *Gospel* that goes under his Name.

Q. *When and upon what Occasion did he write his Gospel?*

A. Tho' some have thought 'twas writ during his Banishment in the Island of *Patmos*; yet *Irenæus*, and others, with great appearance of Truth, affirm it to be written by him after his return to *Ephesus*; composed at the earnest Intreaty of the *Asian* Bishops, and Ambassadors from several Churches; in order whereunto he first solemnizes a General *Fast*, to seek the Blessing of Heaven upon so great and momentous an Undertaking. Two Causes especially contributed to engage him in this Work; the *one*, that he might obviate the early Heresies of those times, particularly of *Ebion*, *Cerintus*, and others, who began to deny *Christ's* Divinity, or that he had any Existence before the *Incarnation*; the Reason why this *Evangelist* is so express and copious on that Subject. The *other* was, that he might supply those Passages of the *Evangelical History*, which the rest of the *Sacred Writers* had omitted; principally insinuating upon the Acts of *Christ* from the first commencing of his Ministry to the Death of *John the Baptist*. The Subject he treats is sublime and mysterious; upon which account he is generally by the *Ancients* resembled to an *Eagle* soaring aloft; and peculiarly honoured with the Title of the *Divine*, as due to him in an eminent and extraordinary manner.

Adv. Hær. lib. 3. c. 1.

Hiero. de Scrip. Eccl.

Cyr. Hiero. catech. 12. §. 1.

Q. *To whom did St. John address his Epistles?*

A. The first is *Catholic*, calculated for all Times and Places, as well as Persons; containing most excellent Rules for the Conduct of the Christian Life; with a particular Regard to
Christian

Christian Charity; the principal Vein that runs through all his Writings, and was the last Subject he recommended to his Hearers: For when Age and Weakness disabled him from preaching, yet at every publick Meeting in the Church, he exhorted them with these words, *Little Children, love one another.* His Auditors, wearied with the constant repetition of the same thing, enquiring the Reason of it, received from him this Answer; *This is what our Lord hath commanded, and if we can do this, we need do nothing else.* This Epistle, which was universally received, and never questioned, is moreover an excellent Antidote against the Poison of *Gnostick* Principles and Practices. The other *two* are directed to particular Persons; and tho' it has been doubted whether they were *Canonical*, yet by the most part of the *Ancients* they are attributed to St. John, and the Doctrine, Phrase, and Design of them, sufficiently challenge our Apostle for their Author.

Hiero.
Tom. 9.
P. 83.

Euseb. Ec-
cles. Hist.
lib. 3. c. 25.

Q. *When did he write his Revelation?*

A. While he was confined in the Island of *Patmos*. And tho' this Book was doubted of by some, yet was it entertained by the far greater part of the *Ancients*, as the genuine Work of St. John the Evangelist. All Circumstances concur to make our *Apostle* the Author of it. His Name frequently exprest; its being written in the Island of *Patmos*; the particular Epistles to the *Seven Churches of Asia*, all planted or at least cultivated by him; the Doctrine in it suitable to the Apostolical Spirit and Temper. All which being put together, makes the Evidence in this Case very considerable.

Q. *What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?*

A. That

A. That the true Love of *Jesus* ought to make us willing to accompany him to Mount *Calvary* as well as to Mount *Tabor*; to bear his Cross as well as to partake of his Glories. To be constant to all the Duties of Friendship, and not to suffer Misfortunes and Adversity to abate the Vigour of them. To endeavour to adorn our Souls with such Dispositions and Qualifications, as may make us hope for a share in the Love of our Redeemer. In all our Composures upon Religious Subjects, to have a particular Eye to the good of others, and to beg God's Blessing upon our Undertakings. To confirm our selves in the belief of our *Saviour's* Divinity, by frequently reading that *Gospel*, which was writ on purpose to preserve us from those *Heresies* that denied it. To abound in the Practice of Christian Charity, the Love of our Neighbour, the distinguishing Mark of a good Christian, which *St. John* urges as the great and peculiar Law of our Religion.

Q. *Wherein does Christian Charity, or the Love of our Neighbour, consist?*

A. In doing him all good Offices, and shewing Kindness towards him. If he be vertuous, 'twill make us esteem him; if he be honest, but weak in Judgment, 'twill create Pity and Succour; if he be wicked, 'twill incline us to pious Admonition, in order to reclaim him; if he receive Good, 'twill make us rejoice; if he receives Evil which we cannot redress, 'twill make us compassionate him; if we can, 'twill make us relieve him; either by supplying his Necessities according to our Power; or by hiding his Disgrace if it be deserved, which is concealing our Neighbour's Defects; and by wiping it off where 'tis not deserved;

served, which is *vindicating his Reputation*. If he be our Inferior, 'twill make us *affable* and *courteous*; if our Equal, 'twill make us *candid* and ready to maintain a good Correspondence; if our Superior, *respectful* and submissive; if we receive Good from him, 'twill make us *thankful* and desirous to require it; if we receive Evil, 'twill make us *slow to anger*, easie to be entreated, ready to forgive, *long-suffering* when 'tis reasonable to exact Punishment, and *merciful* in taking it with such a Competency, as is no more than what he can bear.

Q. *In what sense does our Saviour and St. John call this a new Commandment, since loving our Neighbour is a Breach of the Law of Nature, and a known Precept of the Jewish Religion?*

A. This Commandment is by our Lord and Saviour so much enlarged, as to the *Object* of it, having extended it to all Mankind; so greatly advanced, as to the *Degree* of it, even to the laying down our Lives for one another; so effectually taught, so mightily encouraged, so very much urged and insisted upon, that it may very well be called a *new* Commandment; for tho' it was not altogether unknown to Mankind before, yet it was never taught in this manner, nor such stress laid upon it by any other Institution.

Q. *What Obligations have we to the performance of this Duty?*

A. The *Frame of our Nature* disposes us to it, and our Inclination to Society, in which there can be no Pleasure, no Advantage without mutual Love and Kindness. 'Tis highly *acceptable to God*, and the best Expression of our Love towards him, since our Neighbour is God's Creature,

Joh. 13. 34. ture, and his Image, and the Object of his Love and Kindness. 'Tis the *particular Command* of our Blessed Saviour, urged upon his Disciples so earnestly, as if he required nothing else in comparison of it. 'Tis the proper *Badge and Cogni-*

Joh. 15. 12. *sance* of the Christian Profession, by which the

Ch. 13. 35. Disciples of Jesus were to be distinguish'd from the Disciples of any other Institution. And in the first Ages *Christians* were so eminent for the Practice of this Vertue, that it became a Proverb among the Heathen, *Behold how these Christians love one another.* And all this enforced upon us by the *Example of the Son of God*; whose whole Life and Death was one continued Proof of his Love to Mankind. And he instituted the *Blessed Sacrament* to be a lively Remembrance of that his great Charity, and to be a *perpetual Bond* of Love and Union among his Followers.

Q. By what Rules ought we to govern our Love to our Neighbour?

A. It ought to be *universal*, because we desire every Body should love us; and the Reasons upon which this Duty is founded extend it to all Mankind. It ought to be *sincere*, since the Love of our selves is made the Measure of it. Upon which account we should be as careful to conceal our Neighbour's Defects, and to compassionate his Misfortunes, as we are very apt to do when the Case is our own. It ought to be *solid and substantial*, and to express it self in things of the greatest Consequence; we should love our Neighbours as Christ loved us; this should make us concerned for the Salvation of their *Souls*, and put us upon using all proper means to recover them from a state of Sin and Infidelity.

The

The PRAYERS.

I.

Merciful Lord, I beseech thee to cast thy bright Beams of Light upon thy Church; that it being inlightned by the Doctrine of thy Blessed Apostle and Evangelist *St. John*, may so walk in the Light of thy Truth, that it may at length attain to the Light of Everlasting Life, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

O Lord, who hast taught us that all our doings without Charity are nothing worth; Send thy Holy Ghost and pour into our Hearts that most excellent Gift of Charity, the very Bond of Peace and of all Vertues, without which whoever liveth is counted dead before thee. Grant this for thy only Son Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

III.

Suffer me not, O God, to be tost about with *various Winds of Doctrine*, nor to be imposed upon by the false Reasonings of cunning and subtle Men. But grant that trusting to thy Holy Scriptures, as the certain Rule and Guide of my Faith, and to thy blessed Apostles, as the Planters and Propagators of it, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-Stone; I may rejoice in the Light they afford, and constantly believe those Truths which they have revealed. That I may always adore that Divinity that was incarnate, and worship *Jesus*, who is God as well as
H Man.

Man. Let no heretical Interpretations corrupt the Purity of my Faith, nor Pretences to greater Illumination ever weaken my stedfastness. Thou didst graciously establish thy Church with the Gospel of thy Evangelist *St. John*, when pernicious Errors and Heresies were started to corrupt it. Let the same watchful Eye of Providence still be its Guard and Defence, that all Christians, constantly adhering to the Doctrine he taught, and firmly believing those Divine Mysteries which he plainly made known to the World, may be preserved from all *damnable Heresies*; from those fatal and evil Consequences which attend them in this World; and from those Punishments prepared for them in the next. Grant this thro' the Merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

IV.

GRACIOUS God! who art good and doest good, who extendest thy loving Kindness to all Mankind, thy Creatures, the Work of thy Hands, thy Image capable of loving thee, and enjoying thee eternally: Suffer me to exclude none, O Lord, from my Charity, that are the Objects of thy Mercy and Tenderness; but let me treat all my Neighbours with that Love and Good Will, which is due to thy Servants and to thy Children. Thou hast required this Mark of our Love to thee; oh! let no Temptation expose me to Ingratitude, or make me forfeit thy loving Kindness, which is better than Life it self; but that I may assist all my Brethren with Prayers and good Wishes, where I cannot reach them by actual Services. Make me ready to embrace all Occasions that may administer to their Happiness;

ness; by assisting the Needy, protecting the Oppressed, instructing the Ignorant, reproofing the Wicked and Profane. Grant I may look upon the Defects and Frailties of my Neighbour as if they were my own, that I may conceal them; that making thy Love to me, O Blessed Jesus, the Pattern of my Love to them; I may above all things endeavour to promote their eternal Welfare. Thou thoughtest nothing too dear to part with, to rescue me from eternal Misery; Oh! let me think nothing too dear to part with, to set forward the everlasting Good of my Fellow Christians. They are Members of thy Body, therefore I will cherish them; thou hast redeemed them with an inestimable Price, therefore will I endeavour to recover them from a state of Destruction; that thus adorning thy Holy Gospel, by doing Good according to my power and Capacity, I may at last be received into the Endearments of thy eternal Love, and sing everlasting Praises to the Lamb that was slain and sits upon the Throne. *Amen, Amen.*

C H A P. VIII.

The Holy Innocents. Dec. 28.

Q. *What Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?*

A. The Martyrdom of the *Holy Innocents*; which is mentioned by *Origen* as what was by the Holy Fathers, according to the Will of God, commanded to be for ever celebrated in the Church. Hom. 3. in
Mat.

H 2

Q. In

Q. In what sense were they Martyrs?

A. In that they suffered for Christ, and glorified God by their Deaths. It has been observed that there are three sorts of Martyrdoms; the first in Will and Deed; which was the Case of most of the Apostles; the second in Will but not in Deed; which was the Case of St. John the Evangelist; the Ancients upon this Account giving him the Title of Martyr, that he yielded his Body to Torments; and was willing to die for Christ. The third in Deed but not in Will, which was the Case of the Holy Innocents. It having been the Sense of the Church that they died the Death of Martyrs, tho' incapable of making the Choice; God having supplied the Defects of their Will, by his own Acceptation of the thing.

Iren. lib. 3.
c. 18.

Q. What was the Occasion of the Death of these Infants?

A. Herod being alarmed with the Inquiry of the wise Men from the East; and apprehending his own Kingdom in danger from him that was born King of the Jews, endeavours first by crafty Policy to destroy our Saviour under a Pretence of worshipping him; but the wise Men being warned by God in a Dream, returned into their own Country another way; this Disappointment enraged Herod, and puts him upon the use of open Force, he sent forth and slew all the Children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the Coasts thereof from two Years old and under, hoping to involve the young King in the cruel Execution, and thereby soon to determine his Reign.

Mat. 2. 2.

v. 8.

Mat. 2. 12.

v. 16.

Q. How did our Blessed Saviour escape this bloody Design of Herod?

A. God made known to Joseph the wicked Purpose

Purpose of *Herod*, by the Ministration of an *Angel*; who ordered him to arise and secure the *holy Child Jesus* and his Mother by a Flight into *Egypt*, which he immediately put in Execution; and departed in the *Night*, that they might lose no time, and might the better preserve themselves from Discovery.

Q. What Account have we of our Saviour's Journey and Abode in Egypt?

A. The Scriptures are silent in this matter, tho' Historians affirm his first Abode was at *Heropolis* in the Country of *Thebais*, where when they arrived, the *Holy Child Jesus*, being by Design or Providence carried into the Temple, the Statues and Idols fell down like *Dagon*, at the Presence of the *Ark*, according to the Prophecy of *Isaiah*. Behold the Lord shall come into Egypt, and the Idols of Egypt shall be moved at his Presence.

Q. What Account have we of our Saviour's return from Egypt?

A. *Herod's* Death being made known to *Joseph* by an Angel in Egypt, they returned into the Land of *Israel*, in obedience to the heavenly Admonition, but being apprehensive that *Archelaus* might inherit the Ambition and Cruelty of his Father *Herod*, they went into the parts of *Galilee*, where *Antipas* another of *Herod's* Sons, had seated himself, contending with his Brother *Archelaus* for the whole Kingdom. They dwelt in a City called *Nazareth*, which fulfilled the Prophecy that our Saviour should be called a *Nazarene*; which some Interpreters refer to Christ's being called that *Netser*, in the Prophets; signifying the Branch relating to the House of *Jesse*; of which *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah* and *Zachariah*

Isai. 11. 1. *Zachariah* had so often spoken. Tho' it does
 Jer. 23. 5. not appear how this was fulfilled by Christ's be-
 Zach. 6. 12. ing at *Nazareth*; because he was as much the
Netser, the *Branch*, before, when he was born
 at *Bethlehem*. And therefore others, with greater
 probability, think our Saviour was sent by the
 John 1. 47. *Angel* to this contemptible City of *Nazareth*, out
 of which no good thing was expected, that he
 might thence have a Name of *Infamy*; in which
 Sense it was applied to him by the unbelieving
 Psa. 69. 9, *Jews* and *Gentiles*. And thus the *Prophets* speak
 10. of him, as of a Person that was to be reputed
 Isai. 53. 3. vile and abject, despised and rejected of Men.

Q. *How was Herod punished for his great Wickedness?*

A. He was smitten by God with many *Plagues*
 and *Tortures*. According to *Josephus*, he was
 Jos. lib. 17. c. 8. inflamed with a *slow Fire*, which outwardly seem-
 ed not so vehement, but inwardly afflicted all his
Entrails; he had a *ravenous and unnatural Ap-
 petite*, which could no ways be satisfied; besides
 he had an *ulcer in his Bowels*, with a *strange and
 furious Colick*; his *Feet* were swelled, and of a
venomous Colour; his *Members* rotted and were
 full of *crawling Worms*; to this add, he had
strong Convulsions and shortness of Breath; and
 after having tried the *Physicians* for *Relief* with-
 out Success he died; but not without farther
Testimonies of his Cruelty.

Q. *Is there any Account of the number of Children that were put to Death?*

A. The *Greek Church* in their *Calendar*, and
 the *Abyssines of Ethiopia* in their *Offices* com-
 memorate *fourteen thousand Infants*; for *Herod*
 being crafty, and taking the best Measures he
 could, that the *Holy Child Jesus* might not es-
 cape;

cape; had caused all the Children to be gathered together; which the credulous Mothers (supposing it had been to take an Account of their Age and Number in order to some taxing) hindred not; and thereby they were betrayed to that cruel Butchery.

Q. How does the Evangelist represent the Lamentation of the Bethlemite Parents for their Children?

A. By a prophetick and figurative Speech, cited from Jeremiah, concerning the Captivity Jer. 31. 15. of Babylon and the Slaughter of Jerusalem, long after Rachel's Death, who therefore did not really weep; but is set to express a lamentable Slaughter. And so also it had here a second Completion in this killing of the Infants in Bethlehem.

Q. For what reason may we suppose that God permitted the Destruction of so many Children in Bethlehem?

A. It does not become us too nicely to enquire into the Proceedings of infinite Wisdom, all whose Actions are governed by the highest Reason; but among several Thoughts that offer themselves, we may consider whether the Infidelity of the Bethlemites, after such sufficient Means afforded for their Conviction, might not draw upon them so severe a Punishment. They not only gave no reception to the Virgin Mary, big with Child and of the House of David; but they neither own'd nor worshipp'd our Saviour at his Birth. The Message of the Shepherds and their great Joy; The Arrival of the wise Men from the East and their Offerings; had no effectual Influence upon them. And 'tis not unusual with God to visit the Sins of the Fathers

upon their Children; especially since the Children were made Instruments of God's Glory, and not only delivered from the Miseries of Life and the Corruption of their Ancestors, but were crowned with the Reward of *Martyrdom*.

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. That Religion is but too often used as an Instrument to serve ambitious and worldly Designs; which should make good Men cautious how they combine with Men of that Temper, in the Measures they take to promote it. That Afflictions are not always Arguments of Guilt, since innocent Children were made a Sacrifice to the Ambition of a cruel Tyrant. That they are sometimes Tokens of God's Favour, and that many a Man has owed his Happiness to his Sufferings. That we ought to be ready to part with what is so dear to us as our own Children, whenever they may become Instruments of God's Glory. That we ought not to fear the Cruelty nor Policy of the greatest Tyrant, who can never hurt us without God's Permission. That what Oppression soever Innocence meets with from the Hands of wicked Men, is for the Good of those that suffer it. That the Conduct of those Parents who neglect the Education and Instruction of their Children in Christian and Vertuous Principles, exceeds the Cruelty of *Herod*; he only deprived them of Life, but such expose them to eternal Death. That to be true Disciples of Christ, we must become as little Children in the Frame and Temper of our Minds, without which we cannot *enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*.

Mat. 18. 3.

Q. Wherein consists that Temper of Mind which

which our Saviour represents to us by the Emblem of little Children?

A. It consists in *Humility* and *Lowliness* of Mind; in a total *Submission* to the *Will* of God; and in an *entire Dependence* upon him in all Dangers that relate either to our Bodies or Souls: And particularly in a *Contempt* of the *World*, and a freedom from covetous and ambitious Desires; which never enter into the Minds of Children, and which very much obstruct and hinder our being true Members of Christ's *Spiritual Kingdom*.

Q. Wherein consists this Humility and Lowliness of Mind?

A. In the true Knowledge of our selves, and the Understanding our weak and sinful Condition, taking to our selves the Shame and Confusion due to our Follies; and giving God the Glory of all the Good we receive or are enabled to do. In bearing with Patience the Contumelies of others. In not being too much transported with those Praises we meet with, because however our Actions may appear to Men, 'tis only the Approbation of God which can give us solid Comforts. In avoiding all Occasions of drawing upon our selves Commendations, never speaking nor acting only with a Design to procure Applause.

Q. Wherein consists the Submission of a Christian?

A. In a firm Persuasion of Mind, that nothing happens to us but by the Will and Permission of God. That he loves us better than we do our selves, and knows the best Methods of making us happy. And that therefore we should acquiesce in all Events, how contrary soever to our own

own Inclinations ; and how much soever they may thwart those Schemes of Happiness and Enjoyment which we have framed to our selves.

Q. Wherein consists our entire Dependence upon God ?

A. In expecting in all our Dangers Temporal and Spiritual, by a serious and diligent Discharge of our own Duty, Relief from his Almighty Power, which is able to help us ; and from his infinite Goodness which has promised to assist us. And therefore not to disquiet our selves, with the Apprehension of Dangers and Calamities, that may never happen ; or if they do, may be overruled to our Advantage.

Q. Wherein consists the Contempt of the World ?

A. In looking on all worldly Enjoyments as little and inconsiderable ; meer empty nothings, in comparison of that Happiness which God has prepared for those that love him. In being content with that Portion of the good things of this Life which the wise Providence of God has allotted to our Share ; without being anxiously concerned for the Increase of them, or extremely depressed when they make themselves Wings and fly away. In a moderate Use of all those lawful Pleasures and Enjoyments which relate to the Gratification of our Senses. In a low esteem of those Idols of the World, Riches and Honour ; being ready to forsake them whenever they come in Competition with the Performance of our Duty. In bearing the Afflictions and Calamities of this Life with Patience and Constancy ; looking unto *Jesus*, who for the Joy that was set before him despised the *Cross* ; and consequently in fixing our Minds upon our chiefest Good, and earnestly

earnestly desiring and longing for the Possession of it.

Q. What is the Benefit of this humble, resigned and depending Frame of Mind?

A. 'Tis the proper Disposition for Devotion, and the Parent of Religious Fear. 'Tis the Seed-plot of all Christian Vertues. It makes us ready to receive the Revelations of God's Will to Mankind, and as careful to practise what he enjoyns. It makes us greatest in the *Kingdom of God*, either as that imports our being Members of *Christ's Church* here upon Earth; or our being Members of the *Church Triumphant*, in Possession of eternal Bliss in Heaven.

Q. How does a freedom from covetous and ambitious Desires dispose us to be true Members of Christ's Kingdom?

A. Not only by setting us at a Distance from the most dangerous Temptations of Life, which are Riches and worldly Grandeur; but by giving our Minds leisure to attend the Consideration of Religion, and Liberty to judge and distinguish the true Nature and Value of Things. For while the *Jews* expected a Temporal Deliverer, and were fed with the Hopes of Power and Dominion over all Nations, they were so strongly prejudiced against the mean Appearance of our Saviour, that they refused to acknowledge him for the *Messias*. And if our Saviour had not instructed his Disciples in the Nature of his Kingdom, their Disputes about Preference might have undermined their Charity, and might have prevailed upon them to desert him when frustrated in their Expectations. So that as he required them to become *little Children* in respect of such Desires and Expectations, it is still necessary in order

order to be true Followers of the Blessed Jesus, to mortifie these worldly Affections; for other-ways the *things belonging to the Spirit will not live and grow in us.*

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

O Almighty God, who out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings hast ordain'd Strength, and madest Infants to glorifie thee by their Deaths; mortifie and kill in me all Vices, and so strengthen me by thy Grace, that by the Innocency of my Life, and the Constancy of my Faith, even unto Death, I may glorifie thy holy Name, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

O God, the Strength of all them that put their Trust in thee; Mercifully accept my Prayers. And because thro' the Weakness of my mortal Nature, I can do no good thing without thee; Grant me the Help of thy Grace, that in keeping thy Commandments, I may please thee in Will and Deed; thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

III.

Blessed Jesus, who hast set before me the perfect Pattern of thy Humility, and hast commanded me to copy out so fair an Original; Enable me by thy Grace, to imitate thy wonderful Condescension; that I may not by my Pride and Vanity lose that Happiness thou hast purchas'd for me by thy Humility. Make me sensible of
my

my own Vileness by reason of my Sins, which are evident Proofs of my Weakness and Folly, of my Baseness and Ingratitude; which make me Contemprible in thy Sight, and ought to cover my Soul with Shame and Confusion. Let this Prospect check all vain and aspiring Thoughts, and wean me from any fond Opinion of my self. To thee be the Glory of all the Good I enjoy, for 'tis from thee I received it. To thee be the Glory of all the Good I think or do; for 'tis thy Grace enables me, 'tis thy holy Spirit that works in me, both to *will and do thy good Pleasure*. Let me never purchase the Praise of Men by mean Flatteries and sinful Compliances. Let me never entertain their Applause upon the best Account with too great Delight; lest it corrupt the Purity of my Intentions, and beguile me of that Reward thou hast promis'd to all those that serve thee in Spirit and Truth. Make me patiently to bear the Indignities I may receive from others, because I have deserved them from thee, and because thou hast suffer'd the same upon my account, Grant this, O Blessed Jesus, who with the Father and the holy Spirit livest and reignest one God, World without end. *Amen.*

IV.

MOST Gracious God, who governeest the World with infinite Wisdom and Goodness, and dost *not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men.* Teach me contentedly to submit to the Dispensations of thy Providence, how contrary soever they may be to Flesh and Blood. Thou knowest the surest Ways of making me happy, and art infinite in Loving-kindness and Mercy, therefore let thy blessed Will in every

Lam. 3.33.

every thing be my Choice and Satisfaction. Let all my Dangers either Temporal or Spiritual, awaken me to a careful Performance of my own Duty, and to a lively Sense of thy Power, which nothing can resist, and of thy Goodness which endureth continually; That being armed with this Defence, I may serve thee quietly with a devout Mind, and in thy due time be made Partaker of thy Everlasting Kingdom, thro' Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

C H A P. XI.

**The Circumcision of our Lord
JESUS CHRIST, or New-
Year's Day. January 1.**

Q. *What Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?*

A. The Circumcision of our Lord Jesus Christ; who, when *eight* Days were accomplished, subjected himself to this Law, and first shed his sacred Blood for us.

Q. *What was Circumcision?*

A. A Rite of the *Jewish* Law, whereby that People were received into Covenant with God, as Christians are by Baptism. It was first enjoined to *Abraham*, as a Token of the Covenant God made with him and his Posterity. It was renewed by *Joshua*, when the *Israelites* entered the Land of *Canaan*; it having been disused for forty Years, during their sojourning in the Wilderness.

Q. *When*

Q. *When was Circumcision to be administered?*

A. On the *eighth Day*; because the Mother Lev. 12. 2, being unclean *seven Days*, and the Child by ³ touching her partaking of the same misfortune, was not till then fit to be admitted into Covenant; nor by reason of its weakness could it well endure before that time the pain of the Operation. The *Jews* laid such stress upon this, that *Circum-* Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. c. 4. *cision* before that time was counted no *Circum-* *cision*, and after that time it was of lesser value; hence they thought it necessary, rather than defer it beyond the stated time, to perform it on the *Sabbath-Day*, tho' all Work was on that Day forbidden.

Q. *What was the Punishment threatened for neglecting this Rite?*

A. That *Soul was to be cut off from God's* Gen. 17. *People*; which as the *Jews* generally interpret, ¹⁴ supposed a Man to neglect it when he came to a fitting Age to understand the Obligation of it. For when *Moses's* Child was uncircumcised, the Exod. 4. *Angel* fought not to kill the Child, who was un- ²⁴ circumcised; but *Moses*, the Father who should have circumcised it.

Q. *What was the Original Design of Circumcision?*

A. That every Son of *Abraham* might bear in his Body the Seal of the Inheritance of the Land of Promise, and the Badge of Distinction from all other People, with which all that were marked, professed their Resolution to obey the only true God, Creator of Heaven and Earth; and that this visible Sign might put them constantly in mind of their Duty, and make them strive after the invisible Grace which it sealed,
the

the Inheritance of Heaven, and walking as the peculiar of the Lord.

Q. Why was it to cease after the coming of Christ?

A. The necessity of the Change of it appears from the appropriated and peculiar Ends of the Rite. For when there was to be no more Distinction betwixt the Children of *Abraham* and other People, and no one Land more peculiarized than another, but of every Land and Nation he that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness is accepted of him, that Badge of Appropriation, and Seal of Singularity, must either clean come to nothing, or become unnecessary.

Q. What does Circumcision figuratively represent to us?

A. That as our Birth is impure by reason of *Jam. 1. 21. Original Sin*, so we ought to *lay aside all Filthiness and superfluity of Naughtiness, putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh, by the Circumcision of Christ*, mortifying the Pleasures of the Body, which bewitch the Mind, and make us Captives to Sin and Death.

Q. What Rite of Admission into the Christian Church answers to that of Circumcision under the Law?

A. The *Sacrament of Baptism*, whereby the Children of Christian Parents are made Members of Christ, and obliged to observe the Laws of the Gospel-Institution; as the circumcised Infant by that Rite became a *Debtor to observe the whole Law of Moses*. By this means the Children of Believers are entered into Covenant with God under the Gospel, as they were under the Law by Circumcision; and that Infants are capable of this *fæderal Relation* is plainly declared by *Moses*; and

Acts 15. 5.
Gal. 5. 3.

Deut. 29.
11.

and since they are the Off-spring of *Adam*; and consequently obnoxious to Death by his Fall, how can they be made Partakers of that Redemption which Christ has purchased for the Children of God, if they do not enjoy the advantage of that means which is alone appointed by Christ for them to become Members of God's Kingdom? And therefore it was the constant Custom of the Primitive Church to administer *Baptism* to Infants for the Remission of Sins. And this Practice was esteemed by the best Tradition to be derived from the *Apostles* themselves.

Q. Why was Jesus Christ circumcised, who was holy and without sin?

A. That he might thereby be esteemed the Son of *Abraham*; and be the better qualified to do good among his Countrymen the *Jews*, by bearing this Mark of Distinction which they so much valued, as to despise those that wanted it; and that he might fulfil the whole Law; and shew that he came to bear the Punishment due to our Sins, and to expiate them with his Blood.

Q. What Name was given unto the Son of God when he was circumcised?

A. The imposing a Name being one of the Circumstances that attended *Circumcision*, even from the first Institution of it, as many think; our Lord was then called *Jesus*, according to the direction of the Angel before he was conceived in the Womb: *Luke 1. 31.* And the reason of it, is given by the same Angel, because he should save his People from their Sins. *Mat. 1. 21.*

Q. What is implied in his saving us from our Sins?

A. That by his Death he should deliver us from
I the

the Punishment due to Sin, and reconcile us to God; and that by his Grace he should deliver us from the Power and Dominion of Sin, by enabling us to repent of it, and to mortifie it.

Q. Is the Name of Jesus worthy of all Honour?

A. At the Name of *Jesus* every Knee shall bow. *Gen. 41-43.* The *bowing of the Knee* was counted a Testimony of Reverence: And it was very honourable to exhibit such Marks of Respect, not only to such as were present, but to such as were absent, upon the mentioning of their Names. And it was the Custom of the World in several Religions to express some kind of Reverence when that which they acknowledge for their God was named.

Q. What has the Church enjoined, when we hear that holy Name mentioned in time of Divine Service?

A. That due and lowly Reverence shall be done by all Persons present, as hath been accustomed; testifying by these outward Ceremonies and Gestures, their inward Humility, Christian Resolution, and due Acknowledgment, That the Lord *Jesus* Christ, the true and eternal Son of God, is the only Saviour of the World. *Cant. 18.*

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. The Necessity of Spiritual Circumcision; and that the Condition of the Salvation *Jesus* offers, is the mortifying our corrupt Affections, and the denying the sinful Desires of the Flesh. It teaches us also great Humility of Soul; whereby we should be ready to sacrifice our Reputation rather than neglect our Duty; after our Saviour's Example, who in order to fulfil the Will of God, took upon him not only the

the form of a Servant, but the appearance of a Sinner.

Q. What is implied in Spiritual Circumcision?

A. The retrenching our Temporal Enjoyments, the weaning our Affections from the World, and placing them upon Heaven, and all those things whereby we may obtain the Favour of God. It denotes a strict Government of our sensual Appetites, a total Abstinence from all forbidden Pleasures, and an utter Detestation of such sinful Satisfaction; and even when they are lawful, that they be not pursued with Eagerness and Excess: And it farther imports a readiness of Mind to know our Duty, and what it is God requires from us, and a sincere Disposition to comply with and obey it.

Q. What should the beginning of the New Year suggest unto us?

A. The great Value of *Time*, which God has given us for working out our Salvation; upon the spending whereof depends our Happiness or Misery to all Eternity; the Consideration whereof should put us upon all those Methods, whereby we may employ it to the best Advantage.

Q. What makes Time so very valuable, and why ought we to have so great a regard to the managing of it?

A. Because there is so little of it at our disposal; what is past is slipt from us, the future is uncertain; the present is all we can call our own, which is yet continually fleeting. And tho' the Season of Working is so very short and uncertain, yet we have an Affair of the greatest Consequence to secure, which requires the whole

Force and Vigour of our Minds, the Labour and Industry of all our Days, not to be dispatched with any tolerable Comfort upon a sick Bed; nor in the Evening of our Lives, when our Strength and our Reason are departing from us. Besides if we persist in an obstinate Neglect of all the repeated Tenders of God's Grace, the things that belong to our Peace may be hid from our Eyes.

Q. How ought we to employ our Time, that it may be improv'd to the best advantage?

A. We ought to redeem that which we have mispent, by lamenting the Follies that have consumed so precious a Treasure, and by admiring that great Patience and Goodness of God, which spared us when we deserved Punishment. What we can reserve from the Necessities of Nature and our worldly Affairs, which those Necessities engage us in, ought to be applied to the noblest Purposes, the Glory of God, the Good and Salvation of Men. Nay, even the Affairs of this Life may be sanctified, by considering our selves as the Instruments of Providence, and by faithfully discharging the Duties of our Station, with a regard to another World more than this. And the best Method in order to this end, is to live by Rule; to assign to all our Actions their proper Season, and such a portion of it only as may be necessary for them; whereby Time will never lie upon our hands, nor sting us with regret when 'tis past. Men of Estates and Parts may lay hold on Futurity, by founding Hospitals and Schools for the Relief and Instruction of the Poor. All Christians may dedicate their whole Lives to God's Service in the Days of their Youth; and may make such publick Declarations in behalf
of

of Religion, that they may put themselves under a necessity of living virtuously by cutting off any Retreat to Vanity and Folly.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

Almighty God, who madest thy Blessed Son to be Circumcised, and obedient to the Law for Man; grant me the true Circumcision of the Spirit; that my Heart and all my Members, being mortified from all worldly and carnal Lusts, I may in all things obey thy Blessed Will, through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

OBlessed Jesus! who by the Purity of thy Life, and the meritorious Sufferings of thy Death hast purchas'd for us an Eternal Inheritance; Deliver me by the Power of thy Grace from the greatest Evil, my Sins; and reform and reduce my Heart to the Obedience of thy Laws. Make me carefully to avoid all those Occasions that have formerly betrayed me to Folly; all those Practices that heighten my corrupt Inclinations and Passions, and alienate my Mind from the Love of God. Give me a constant Supply of Courage and Resolution to resist the Temptations of the World, the Flesh and the Devil; that being rescued from the Dominion of my corrupt Affections, by being turned from Darkness to Light, I may be assured thou wilt deliver me from Eternal Death and Hell Torments, which are the Punishment due unto my Transgressions.

gressions. Grant this through the Virtue of that Sacred Name thou didst this Day receive; to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be all Honour and Glory, World without end. *Amen.*

III.

Almighty God, I adore thy infinite Patience, which has not cut me off in the midst of my Follies; I magnifie thy wonderful Goodness, which has spared me thus long, and indulged me a larger time of Repentance. Let me no longer abuse that precious Treasure, which thou hast allotted me as a proper Season to work out my own Salvation, and to secure that Happiness which is great in it self, and infinite in its Duration. Let me bid adieu to all those vain Amusements, those trifling Entertainments and cruel Diversions, which have robbed me of many valuable Hours, and have endangered the Loss of my immortal Soul. Let me no longer waste my Time in Ease and Pleasure, in unprofitable Studies, and more unprofitable Conversation; but grant that by Diligence and Honesty in my Calling, by Constancy and Fervour in my Devotions, by Moderation and Temperance in my Enjoyments, by Justice and Charity in all my Words and Actions, and by keeping a Conscience void of Offence towards God and Man, I may be able to give a good Account of it in the Day of Judgment; and be accepted in and through the Merits of Jesus Christ my only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

C H A P. X.

The Epiphany. January 6.

Q. **W**hat Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?

A. The Epiphany, or the Manifestation (as the Word signifies in the *Greek*) of our Saviour Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.

Q. To what Gentiles was our Saviour this Day manifested?

A. To the *wise Men* of the *East*, called *Magi* Mat. 2. 1. in the *Greek*; who were famous for all sorts of μαθησι. Learning, especially celebrated for their Know- Porphyr. de Abst. l. 4. §. 16. ledge and Skill in *Astronomy*; and in the *East* Plat. apud Apul. Apol. p. 290. their Priests and Men of the best Quality dedi- Lightfoot Vol. 1. p. 436. cated themselves to these Studies: Tho' some Authors are of Opinion, that the *Greek* Word we translate *wise Men*, is in the Scripture always taken in the worst Sense, for Men practising *Magical* and unlawful Arts; and if it be so understood, it magnifieth the Power and Grace of Christ the more, that among the *Gentiles* Men of such a Profession should be the first Adorers of the Blessed Jesus.

Q. What other Signification has the Word Epiphany?

A. It signifies Christ's Appearance in the World, the Nativity of our Saviour; which among the *Ancients* is commonly stiled, the *Appearing* simply, or the *Appearing of God*. And the *Feast* of the *Nativity* being celebrated *twelve Days*, of which the first and the last, according to the Custom of the *Jews* in their Ham. Mat. 23. Feasts,

Feasts, were high or chief Days of Solemnity, each of these might fitly be called *Epiphany* in that Sense, and not only referring to the Star; though not excluding but containing it also, as a special Circumstance belonging to the Nativity. Besides, the Word has been farther made use of to express the glorious Manifestation at our Saviour's Baptism, and his miraculous Power at the Marriage in *Cana*, by turning Water into Wine.

Mat. 3. 16,
17.
John 2. 11.

Q. How did God manifest the Birth of our Saviour to the wise Men?

A. By a luminous Appearance of a Star in the lower Region of the Air, observed by those *wise Men* to differ from the ordinary Stars of Heaven, which as a new prodigious Sight, seemed to them to presage something of great Moment and Consideration. For *new Stars* among the *Gentiles* were sometimes look'd upon as *Omens* that Infants born at the time of their Appearance should arrive to great Power. It seems not improbable what some Authors have suggested, that this *seeming Star* which appeared to the *wise Men* in the *East*, might be that *glorious Light* which shone upon the *Bethlem* Shepherds when the Angel came to impart to them the Tidings of our Saviour's Birth; which at a distance might appear like a Star, or at least after it had thus shone upon the Shepherds might be lifted up on high, and then formed into the Likeness of a *Star*.

Just. de
Mith. lib.
27. c. 2.
Lucan. l. 1.
Plin. Nat.
Hist. l. 2.
c. 25. de
Augus.

Q. How could the wise Men guess at the Birth of our Saviour from the Appearance of this Star?

Num. 24.
27.

A. Some think they might receive Light in this matter from the Prophecy of *Balaam*, or from some

some other Prophecies in *Daniel*; but as one seems too obscure for the determining any particular time, so the others probably were not known to the *Chaldeans*. 'Tis more likely they might be governed by that general Expectation the World was then in of an universal Monarch, and by the particular Expectation the *Jews* had of the *Messias's* coming in that Age, which might easily be promulged to the neighbouring Nations. Tho' besides this, some way of Divine Revelation may be supposed by their calling him *King of the Jews*. For when God gave an extraordinary Sign, we may well imagine he would take care to have it understood. Mat. 2. 2.

Q. How did they learn that our Saviour should be born in Bethlehem?

A. Upon their Arrival at *Jerusalem*, they publish'd the Cause and Design of their Journey; which gave great uneasiness to *Herod*, who was jealous of any Competitor. Upon which *Herod* Mat. 2. enquired of those who had greatest Skill in the ancient Prophecies, what Place was assigned for the Birth of the expected *Messias*. When he understood that *Bethlehem* was mark'd out for that Honour, he communicated to the *wise Men* the Determination of the *Chief Priests and Scribes*, with a design to destroy this young Prince if they discovered him; strictly charging them to bring him word, pretending that he would go and worship him; which trouble and jealousy of *Herod* confirms the Expectation the *Jews* had of a King to be born about that time.

Q. How did the wise Men find the young Child Jesus?

A. By the help of the same *Star* which appeared to them in their own Country; which Mat. 2. 9.
was

was now visible to them again, and conducted them in their search of our Saviour, by going before them, and standing still where the young Child was; which was matter of great Joy and Satisfaction to them.

Q. How did the wise Men behave themselves upon their finding our Saviour?

A. They fell down and worshipp'd him, and opened their Treasures, and presented unto him Gifts, Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh; the most valuable Product of their own Country; thereby also acknowledging his Majesty, according to the Custom all over the East, where they were wont to approach Kings with Presents. And by the Quality of their Gifts they seemed to describe the Object of their Adoration; for they offered Myrrh as to a Man that was to be delivered to Death and the Grave for our Salvation; Gold as to a King, whose Kingdom should have no end; Incense as to a God, who was made known to them that sought him not.

Irenæ. lib.
3. c. 10.

Q. Why did God manifest his Son to the Gentiles?

A. That his Grace might appear to all Men. For as the Jews had notice of our Saviour's Birth by the Appearance of Angels to the Shepherds, so the Gentiles received it now by the Appearance of a Star; thereby shewing that the time was come wherein the Wall of Partition should be broken down, and that all Nations should be one Sheepfold, under one Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Q. Wherein appears the Zeal and Courage of these wise Men?

A. That upon the Appearance of an extraordinary Star, they undertook so long and tedious a Journey

a Journey, neither regarding the Discourses of the World, which might charge them with Folly and Rashness; nor considering the Dangers of going to proclaim a new-born King at the Court of a jealous Prince.

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. That true Wisdom does not so much consist in a great Understanding, furnish'd with a large stock of universal Learning, as in the use of such Advantages to the noblest Purposes of serving God and doing Good. That no Man is too Great to be Religious, because Piety and Vertue are the only Qualities that ennoble the Mind, without which, Birth and Title will never give a Man a solid and lasting Character. Readily to obey all Divine Inspirations; for tho' God prevents us with his Grace, yet he expects we should make a right use of it. Not to be discouraged with any difficulty that lies in the way of our Duty; and notwithstanding the Censures of the World, which will be apt to condemn us, when we depart from the common Road of its loose Maxims, yet chearfully to obey when Obligation calls. To quit our Country, and all the Advantages of Life, when Obedience to God's Commands makes it necessary. To take care to testify the Sincerity of our Faith, by not being barren or unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. To make the outward Acts of our Adoration, and the doing Homage to the Deity, real Expressions of the Sense of our Minds and inward Affections. To offer to him the Treasure of our Hearts, which is the chief Sacrifice he requires.

Q. What Virtues do the Offerings of the wise Men

Men represent unto us, as an acceptable Sacrifice to our Blessed Saviour?

A. Gold, which is the common Standard of those good things we enjoy, and wherewith we may relieve the wants of the Poor, is a fit Emblem for Charity and Works of Mercy, an Odour of a sweet smell, a Sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God. And David's desiring his Prayer might be set before God as Incense, and the Prayers of the Saints ascending after the same manner in the Revelations, shews us how fitly our Addresses to Heaven are represented by Frankincense. And the chief use of Myrrh being to preserve dead Bodies from Putrefaction, is a lively Image of Mortification, that we should present our Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. So that the Offerings of a true Christian should be out of a pure Heart, Charity, Prayer and Mortification.

Phil. 4. 18. *Phil. 4. 18.*
 Psal. 141. 2. *Psal. 141. 2.*
 Rev. 8. 4. *Rev. 8. 4.*
 Rom. 12. 1. *Rom. 12. 1.*

Q. How may we make our Riches an acceptable Sacrifice to our Blessed Saviour?

A. By making use of them to those ends and purposes for which they were bestowed, in supplying the Exigences of our Families, and in making such decent Provision for our Children, as becomes the Station we are placed in: By satisfying all our just Debts, and not oppressing our poor Neighbours by delaying the Payment of them: And particularly by taking care that the Necessitous, and those that want Relief, always have their due proportion, which Justice as well as Charity gives them a right to.

Q. When may our Prayers be said to ascend before God as Incense?

A. When they are offered with such Constancy and Fervour, as shew we are earnestly solicitous of

of those things we ask. And yet with such *Modesty* and *Humility* as loudly proclaims our own Unworthiness, and magnifies that wonderful Condescension whereby we are admitted to approach God's Presence. When our Minds are abstracted from the World, and the Concerns of this Life do as little as may be mingle with our Requests to God. Above all, when our Petitions are offered with *Faith, nothing wavering*. And then we may be said to believe we shall receive the good things we ask, when we perform those Conditions upon which God has promised to bestow them.

Q. When is our Mortification an acceptable Sacrifice ?

A. When we not only abstain from the outward Acts of Sin, which feed our Disease and strengthen our ill Habits ; but when we deny our bad Inclinations the Consent of our Wills ; and deprive them of all those Occasions and Liberties, which tho' lawful in themselves are yet dangerous to us ; because they set us upon the brink of a Precipice : And when this contradicting our allowed Pleasure, is designed in order to get the better of all sinful Desires, so that we may not be governed nor led by them.

Q. How ought we to commemorate the Manifestation of our Saviour to the Gentiles ?

A. With great Thankfulness of Mind ; because upon this enlarging the *way of Salvation* we became acquainted with the Knowledge of Jesus Christ : And with a compassionate Sense of the Miseries of those that still sit in Darkness, and want the Light of the glorious Gospel.

The PRAYERS.

I.

O God, who by the leading of a Star didst manifest thy only begotten Son to the Gentiles; mercifully grant that I, who know thee now by Faith, may after this Life have the Fruition of thy glorious Godhead, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

O Lord, from whom all good things do come, for as much as without thee I am not able to please thee, mercifully grant that thy blessed Spirit may in all things rule and direct my Heart; that by his holy Inspiration I may think those things that be good, and by his gracious guiding may perform the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

III.

Most Gracious God, who through thy infinite Goodness hast been pleased to offer Salvation to all Mankind, and to receive all humble Supplicants as Objects of thy Mercy. Thou didst communicate the glad Tidings of our Saviour's appearing in the World to the People of *Israel* by the Ministration of Angels; and thou didst vouchsafe, as on this Day, to reveal the joyful News to the Gentiles, by ordering a bright Star to point at the Rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his Wings. Blessed be thy holy Name for that glorious Light, which dispers'd it self through the dark Regions

Regions of this World, which dispelled the thick Clouds of Ignorance and Idolatry, of Folly and Vanity; which directed Mankind to the true and most worthy Object of their Worship, and raised their Nature to its utmost Improvement. Adored be thy infinite Mercy, which brought the joyful Sound to this Land of my Nativity, and hast permitted it to partake of the gracious and benign Influences of thy distinguishing Providence. O may we always value such an inestimable Benefit, by walking as Children of the Light, and by compassionating the Miseries of those that still sit in Darkness! To this end, I humbly beseech thee to prosper the Undertakings of that *Society* which is establish'd among us for *propagating the Gospel in foreign parts*; make them zealous and diligent in that good Work, give them Wisdom to discern the best and most proper means of promoting it, Courage and Resolution to pursue it; and by Unity and Affection in their Consultations, and by thy Blessing upon their Endeavours, the happiness to effect it; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

IV.

Grant, O Lord, that I may shew my Sense of the great Mercy we this Day commemorate, by imitating the Conduct of the *wise Men*, who were not discouraged by Difficulties from obeying thy divine Call. That the rash Censures of the World may never prevail upon me to comply with its loose and unchristian Maxims, nor the Terrors of it ever affright me from my Duty. That thy holy Word may govern all my Paths, and direct all my Ways;
and

and that, when I run astray from thy Commandment, it may recover me to a sense of my Obligations. That the good things of this World, which thy Bounty has bestowed upon me, may be offered for the relief of those that labour under Want and Poverty, a Sacrifice acceptable and well-pleasing to thee. That my Prayers may constantly and fervently ascend before thee as Incense; with that attention of Mind which thy Greatness and my own daily Necessities require from me. That I may sacrifice to thee all those lawful Pleasures which too much unbend my Mind, and but too often corrupt my Innocence, and betray my strongest Resolutions; that so by contradicting sometimes my lawful Inclinations, I may through the assistance of thy Grace get the mastery of all sinful Desires. Let all these my Christian Offerings proceed from a sincere and honest Mind, for the Heart is the chief Sacrifice thou requirest; and grant, O Lord, that they may be acceptable to thee, through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ my only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

C H A P.

C H A P. XI.

The Conversion of St. Paul.

January 25.

Q. **W**hat Festival does the Church this Day celebrate?

A. The Conversion of St. Paul; a chosen Vessel to bear God's Name before the *Gentiles*, Acts 9. 15. and Kings and the Children of *Israel*. An Apostle in an extraordinary manner set apart to be a Preacher of that Gospel, which he had persecuted, not only to the *Jews* but to the *Heathen* World.

Q. Why does the Church chuse to commemorate St. Paul by his Conversion?

A. Because as it was wonderful in it self, and a miraculous effect of the powerful Grace of God, so it was highly beneficial to the Church of Christ; for while other Apostles had their particular Provinces, he had the care of all the Churches, and by his indefatigable Labours contributed very much to the propagation of the Gospel throughout the World.

Q. By what Name is this Apostle described in Scripture?

A. By two, *Saul* and *Paul*. The one *Hebrew*, relating to his *Jewish* Original, being of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, among whom that Name was famous, ever since the first King of *Israel*, *Saul*, was chosen out of that Tribe. The other *Latin*, referring to the *Roman* Corporation where Acts 13. 7. &c. he was born. Tho' some have thought it to have been in memory of his converting *Sergius Paulus*

Paulus the Roman Governour, and others, that it was assumed by him after his Conversion, as Ephes. 3. 8. an Act of Humility; styling himself *less than the least of Saints*.

Q. *Where was St. Paul born?*

Acts 22. 3. A. At *Tarsus*, the Metropolis of *Cilicia*, a City famous for Riches and Learning; where the liberal Sciences and all polite Arts flourished, and where the Inhabitants enjoyed the Privileges and Liberties of Roman Citizens; which advantage St. Paul asserted as the Privilege of his Birthright. After having laid the Foundation of humane Learning in this place, he was sent by his Parents to *Jerusalem*, to be brought up at the Feet of *Gamaliel* in the Study of the Law, in which he made very quick and large Improvements.

Q. *How came he to be educated besides to the Trade of Tent-making?*

A. According to the Custom of the Jews, among whom it was a Maxim, *That he who teaches not his Son a Trade, teaches him to be a Thief*; designing thereby not only to keep their Children from Idleness, but to secure them a Maintenance if their Circumstances made it necessary to work at it.

Q. *How did St. Paul behave himself before his Conversion?*

A. Being educated in the Principles of the *Pharisees*, the strictest Sect of the Jewish Religion, and being naturally of a hot Temper, he violently opposed all those that were esteemed Enemies to the *Mosaick Oeconomy*; and persecuted the Christians with great Fury, breathing out Threatnings and Slaughter against the Disciples at *Jerusalem*; making havock of the Church, and

Acts 8. 3.
9. 1, 2.

and procuring a Commission to imprison such as he found Christians at *Damascus*. How far he was concerned in the Martyrdom of *St. Stephen*, *Acts 8. 1.* does not appear, any farther than that he was consenting to his Death, and so became a sharer in the Guilt of those that murdered him.

Q. How was St. Paul converted?

A. In an extraordinary manner; for when he was upon his Journey near to *Damascus*, on a 9. 3, 4, &c. sudden there shined round about him a Light from Heaven, above the brightness of the Sun; whereat being strangely amazed, he and his Companions fell to the Ground; and he heard a Voice calling to him, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* To which he replied, *Lord, who art thou?* who told him, *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest*, and 'tis best for thee not to be refractory to the Commands which shall now be given thee; designing to make him a Minister and Witness both of those things he had seen, and of those he should afterwards hear; and that he would stand by him and preserve him, and make him a great Instrument in the Conversion of the Gentile World.

Q. What effect had the heavenly Vision upon him?

A. The great Splendor of it made him blind for three Days; but he did not with *Elymas* the Sorcerer, *pervert the right Ways of the Lord*, *Acts 13. 10.* nor with his Brethren the *Jews* resist the Evidence *Mat. 3. 17.* of a Voice from Heaven, which testified to our Saviour's Divinity at his Baptism; but became obedient to the heavenly Vision, and upon this discovery of his Saviour, diligently enquired his Will and Pleasure, and immediately followed the Directions he received.

Q. Who admitted St. Paul into the Christian Church?

*Acts 9. 10,
&c.*

A. After St. Paul had fasted three Days, and humbled his Soul under the Sense of those Cruelties he had committed against the Church of God; *Ananias*, a devout Man, supposed to be one of the *Seventy Disciples*, and tho' a Christian, yet well esteemed of among the *Jews*; having been admonished by a Vision, went to St. Paul, and entering into the House, brought him the good News, that the same Jesus that appeared to him in the Way, had sent him to him; and laying his Hands upon him, he received his Sight, and the Gift of the *Holy Ghost*, and was made a Member of the Church by Baptism.

Q. What Reason may be assigned for the miraculous manner of his Conversion?

*1 Tim. I.
16.*

A. That St. Paul, who was to be the Apostle of the *Gentiles*, might in his own Person be an evident proof of the Power of God's Grace, and of his readiness to receive the worst of Sinners upon their Repentance: *He obtained Mercy that Jesus Christ might shew forth first in him all long-suffering, for a pattern to them that should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.* Besides, this gave great Authority to the Apostle's Testimony, which was necessary, considering the great share he was to have in planting Christianity thro' the World. Add to this, that St. Paul appear'd to have a very honest Mind, and to be influenced with a regard only to what he thought Truth; but being prejudic'd by Education, and push'd on by the heat of his natural Temper, was transported with furious Zeal; and that therefore God was pleased to shew Mercy to him, because what he did, was done ignorantly, in unbelief;

*1 Tim. I.
13.*

belief; and in a miraculous manner to convince him of the Truth of that Religion which he persecuted.

Q. How did St. Paul demonstrate the Sincerity of his Conversion?

A. By preaching that very *Jesus*, whom he had persecuted; confounding the *Jews* that dwelt at *Damascus* in proving him to be the true *Messias*, the Son of God; in labouring to establish the Church which he had made havock of; in comforting and confirming the Faithful that he had haled to Prison, exposing himself to those Dangers and Difficulties for the Faith, which he had endeavoured to bring upon others.

Q. Where did St. Paul bestow his Apostolical Labours?

A. Whereas the other *Apostles* chose this or that Province as the main Sphere of their Ministry, *St. Paul* over-ran as it were the whole *Roman Empire*; seldom staying long in a place; from *Jerusalem* through *Arabia*, *Asia*, *Greece*, round about to *Italy*, to *Rome*, and even to the utmost bounds of the Western World. The greatest part of his Travels are recorded in the *Acts of the Apostles*; and in this Course he was discouraged by no Dangers nor Difficulties, for he frequently suffered severe Scourgings and Imprisonments, and was brought even to the Confines of Death both at Sea and Land; neither was he tired out with any Troubles or Oppositions that were raised against him; but for the space of five and thirty Years was indefatigable in preaching the Gospel, and in writing Epistles for the confirming those Churches he had established; thus persevering in the good Fight of Faith, till he finished his Course.

Clem. Epist. ad Corinth.

2 Tim. 4. 7.

Q. Having extended his Labours to the utmost Bounds of the Western World, may we not reasonably suppose he planted a Church in this our Island?

A. There is very good and sufficient Evidence built on the Testimony of ancient and credible Writers, with a concurrent probability of Circumstances, That there was a Christian Church planted in Britain during the Apostles times. Eusebius, a learned and inquisitive Person, affirms in his third Book of Evangelical Demonstration, That some of the Apostles preached the Gospel in the British Islands. Theodoret, another learned and judicious Historian, expressly names the Britains among the Nations converted by the Apostles; and says in another place, that St. Paul brought Salvation to the Islands that lie in the Ocean. St. Jerom testifies, that St. Paul after his Imprisonments, preached the Gospel in the Western Parts. By which the British Islands were especially understood; as will appear by the following Testimony of Clemens Romanus, who saith, St. Paul preached Righteousness thro' the whole World, and in so doing went to the utmost Bounds of the West; which necessarily includes the British Islands, as is plain to those who know how the Phrase, the utmost Bounds of the West, was used by the Historians and Poets of those times.

Lib. 3. c. 7. Tom. 1. in
Psal. 116. Hierom. in
Amos c. 5. Epist. ad
Corinth.

Q. What probable Circumstances concur to incline us to think that St. Paul was the Person that planted a Christian Church in Britain?

A. The Leisure and Opportunity he had for this purpose; it being about eight Years between the time of obtaining his Freedom at Rome, and his return thither again; in which time he preach-
ed

ed the Gospel in the *West*, according to the common and received Opinion of all the *Fathers*. It being not likely that a Person so indefatigable in his Labours before his Imprisonment at *Rome* should lie still afterwards; and 'tis probable he did not return to the *East*, having so solemnly taken his leave of those Churches, saying *that* Act. 20. 21. *they should see his Face no more*. St. Paul might have Encouragement to this Undertaking from the great Number of the Inhabitants, and from the Settlement of Colonies both *Trading* and *Military* here by the *Romans*. And from *Pomponia Gracina*, who was probably a Christian, and Wife to *A. Plautius*, the *Roman* Lieutenant in *Britain*. And 'tis not unlikely but that some of the *British* Captives, carried over with *Caractacus*, and his Family, might be among the considerable Converts St. Paul made at *Rome*; who would certainly promote the Conversion of their Country, by so great an Apostle. None of the rest of the Apostles stand in competition with St. Paul for this Mission, but St. Peter; whose Business lay quite another way: Being the Apostle of the *Circumcision*, he was to attend the *Jews*, and consequently his chief Employment must be where the greatest Numbers of the *Jews* were: And the Historians that affirm St. Peter's coming into *Britain*, are of no great Authority, being often slighted by those that produce them. A more exact and full Account of this matter, may be found in B. *Stillingfleet's Orig. Britan.*

Q. Where did St. Paul suffer Martyrdom?

A. At *Rome* under *Nero*, in that general Persecution raised against the Christians, upon pretence that they fired the City. Some of the Ancients affirm he drew upon himself the Fury of

that cruel *Emperor*, by joyning with *St. Peter* in procuring the Fall of *Simon Magus*; others, by converting a Concubine of *Nero's*, that he extremely loved and careffed. He was beheaded in the *Sixty eighth Year* of his Age; and from the Instrument of his Execution, the Custom arose always in his Pictures to draw him with a *Sword* in his Hand.

Q. What Writings did St. Paul leave behind him?

A. Fourteen Epistles; which were not only Instrumental in confirming the Churches at first, but they have been highly useful ever since, to the Service of Religion in all Ages. These holy Writings must be read with *Humility* and *Modesty*, because *St. Peter* has long since observed, *2 Pet. 3. 16.* that in them are some things *hard to be understood, which the unlearn'd and unstable wrest to their own destruction.*

Q. What Controversies exercised the Church in this Apostle's time?

A. The damnable Heresies of Simon Magus and his Followers, who were afterwards known by the Name of Gnosticks; who placed the main of Religion in Knowledge, neglecting the Practice of it; and who, in times of Persecution, thought it lawful to deny the Faith. But the most considerable Controversie was, Whether Circumcision and the observation of the Mosaick Law, or only the Belief and Practice of Christianity, be necessary to Salvation; the last was maintained by the Apostles, the former by the Judaizing Christians. And St. Paul's Discourses about Justification and Salvation immediately refer to this Controversie.

Q. How was this Controversie determined?

A. By

A. By the Apostolick Synod at *Jerusalem*; Acts 15. where it was declared, that the *Gentiles* were^{28, 29.} under no Obligation to observe the *Jewish* Law; God having clearly manifested his acceptance of them. Yet, not to provoke the *Jews*, the *Gentile* Converts were somewhat restrained in the exercise of their Christian Liberty.

Q. *What may we learn from the Commemoration of St. Paul's Conversion?*

A. To adore that miraculous Grace which called him to be an Apostle. To bless God for the Advantages we have had from his laborious and indefatigable Pains. And tho' we have been great Sinners, to encourage our selves from his Example with hopes of Acceptance, provided we sincerely repent. That the best way to shew the sincerity of our Conversion, is by Actions opposite to our former Sins, that those Vertues may be most conspicuous in our turning to God, which have been most neglected in our state of Folly. That when we charge our selves with the Breaches of God's Laws, we always remember that Guilt we have contracted by partaking in other Men's Sins; which *St. Paul* so frequently bewailed upon the account of consenting to *St. Stephen's* Death.

Q. *Since partaking in other Mens Sins makes us liable to share in the Guilt and Punishment of them; pray what is meant by partaking in other Mens Sins?*

A. When, before any wicked Action is committed, we are any ways knowingly aiding or abetting towards the committing of it: Or when after it is committed, we are any ways approving or justifying of it; by either of which means we partake in other Mens Sins, tho' we are not the immediate Actors of them.

Q. *What*

Q. What are the usual ways whereby we partake in Mens Sins before they are committed?

A. Those that are Superiours, as *Magistrates, Masters, and Parents*, share in the Guilt, by ordering or commanding any evil thing; or by not using their Power to prevent and punish it; or by not expressly refusing to concur in such evil things as are proposed to be enacted by mutual Consent. Those that are *Ministers*, by neglecting to teach others their Duty, or by forbearing to warn their Flock, as careful Watch-men should, against approaching Danger. Those that are in any subordinate *Office*, by *Ministring* in any unlawful Business, helping it forward by Advice and Counsel, by furnishing Provisions, by wishing or praying for the Success of it. And all others by the Influence of their own ill Example, which is powerful of it self, but more fatal when the Example is eminent for Power, Parts and Learning.

Q. What are the usual ways whereby we partake in Mens Sins after they are committed?

A. By approving a wicked thing after it is acted; inwardly delighting in it, which is to take part thereof in Will and Affection. By appearing to praise it; which sets off the Wickedness not only as innocent, but as worthy and honourable. By justifying and defending it; which in some sense makes a Man more guilty than he that committed it; for that might be through the strength of Temptation, and through the infirmity of Passion, the other is the effect of Judgment and Consideration. Every Expression of Approbation, in proportion to its degree, puts the Approver into the Evil-doer's case, and makes it his own.

The

The PRAYERS.

I.

O God, who thro' the preaching of the blessed Apostle *St. Paul*, hast caused the Light of thy Gospel to shine throughout the World; grant, I beseech thee, that I having his wonderful Conversion in remembrance, may shew forth my Thankfulness unto thee for the same, by following the holy Doctrine he taught; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

O Lord, raise up (I pray thee) thy Power, and come among us, and with great Might succour us: That whereas through my Sins and Wickedness, I am fore lett and hinder'd in running the Race that is set before me; thy bountiful Grace and Mercy may speedily help and deliver me, through the Satisfaction of thy Son our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be Honour and Glory, World without end. *Amen.*

III.

O God, who declarest thy Almighty Power, most chiefly in shewing Mercy and Pity; mercifully grant unto me such a measure of thy Grace, that I running the way of thy Commandments may obtain thy gracious Promises, and be made Partaker of thy heavenly Treasure, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

IV.

I Adore, O Lord, that miraculous Grace which thou wert pleased to manifest to thy blessed *Apostle*: And I praise thy holy Name for that powerful Assistance thou hast promised to all those that follow the Example of his Piety. Send forth thy Light into my Heart, and make me sensible of all my wicked ways. Stir me up carefully to attend to what thou requirest of me, and make me ready to perform it. Let the Practice of thy holy Laws bear witness to the inward change of my Mind; that no advantage of Nature or Grace may make me proud and haughty; that no Plenty and Abundance may make me sensual and carnal; that when Riches increase, I may not set my Heart upon them, but be ready to relieve thy poor distressed Members both in their Souls and Bodies. Let no Danger or Difficulty deter me from a zealous prosecution of my Duty; let no prospect of Labour or Pains slacken my Industry, but make me steadfast and immoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord. Shew Mercy, O God, to all those that are misled by Error, or seduced by Vice, that by thy heavenly Light, their Blindness may be removed, and their Weakness cured; through Jesus Christ my only Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

C H A P. XII.

The Purification of the Blessed Virgin. February 2.

Q. *What Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?*

A. The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, commonly called the *Purification of the blessed Virgin Mary.*

Q. *What was the Law of Purification?*

A. All the Women were obliged to separate Levit. 12. themselves from the publick Congregation *forty* Days after the Birth of a Male Child, and *eighty* Days after the Birth of a Female. And when the Days of their Purifying were fulfilled, if they were Rich they brought a Lamb of the first Year for a *Burnt-Offering*, and a young Pigeon or Turtle-Dove for a *Sin-Offering*; if Poor two Turtles, or two young Pigeons, which the Priest offered before the Lord, and made an *atonement* for them?

Q. *What does this Purification import?*

A. That since *Adam's Fall* we are conceived in Sin, that our Birth is impure, and that we derive from our Parents an hereditary Stain, whereby we are naturally unclean, and *Children of Wrath*; and to shew the Contagion thereof, not only the Child was circumcised, but the Mother also was cleansed by a Sacrifice for Sin.

Q. *What did the Law require concerning the Presentation of the First-born?*

A. That every Male that openeth the Womb Exod. 13. should 2. 15.

should be holy to the Lord; that is, consecrated and set apart for his immediate Service. For when God exempted the First-born of the Hebrews from that Destruction, he brought upon the First-born of the Egyptians, he command-

Numb. 18. ed that the First-born of the Hebrews should be
16. dedicated to him, or redeemed at the Price of *five Shekels*. As therefore the Firstlings of clean

Numb. 8. Beasts were separated for the use of the Altar, so
16, 17, 18. the First-born of Men were for the use of the Tabernacle; till the Levites were substituted in their stead by God Almighty's particular direction. After which remained still the Footsteps of the Old Law, that Mothers were obliged to present their First-born in the Temple, and to pay a Ransom to the Priest. The Price of the Redemption was the same both to Rich and Poor, as were the Charges of their Burials; admonishing us of that Equality Nature has established between all Men in coming into the World and going out.

Q. What does the redeeming of the First-born signify unto us?

A. The Redemption of God's People, called the Church of the First-born, which are written in Heaven, and not redeemed with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of Christ.

Q. Since there was no Impurity in the Birth of our Saviour, and that the Blessed Virgin contracted no Pollution by bringing him forth; why did they submit to these Laws?

A. Being born under the Law, it became our Saviour to fulfil all Righteousness, who came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it: And the blessed Virgin being exposed to the publick Opinion

nion and common Reputation of an ordinary Condition, thought it reasonable to comply with all the Obligations of such Circumstances; and hereby she exprest great Humility, Obedience, and Reverence to publick Sanctions. Besides, there was thus an occasion given for the first publick Declaration of our Saviour by good old *Luke 2.25,* *Simeon and Anna the Prophetess.* 36.

Q. What may we learn from the Consequence of this Instance?

A. That the Injunctions of Publick Authority, whilst lawful, ought to be obeyed; though all the Ends of their first Institution should not be alike served by them; Obedience to Authority being a necessary Duty, even when the Rites it requires are no other ways necessary than as they are enjoined.

Q. What Offerings did the Blessed Virgin make?

A. The Offerings of the Poor, a pair of *Turtles*, or *two young Pigeons*. Such mean and low Circumstances did our blessed Saviour chuse when he came into the World upon the Work of our Redemption; such was his great Bounty and Kindness, that *tho' he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we thro' his poverty might be rich.* *2 Cor. 8. 9.*

Q. How was our blessed Saviour known to Simeon and Anna?

A. *Simeon* being a just and devout Man, waiting for the Consolation of *Israel*, which was the expectation of the promised *Messias*; God was pleased to reveal to him, that he should not see Death before he had seen the Lord's *Christ*; and at this very time, when *Christ* was presented in the Temple, he was by the guidance and dictate of

of God's Spirit brought thither. And the Prophetess *Anna* constantly attending the Service of the Temple, remarkable for Mortification and Devotion, came in at the same instant. They both gave Thanks unto the Lord, and spake of him to all that look'd for Redemption in *Jerusalem*; *Simeon* in that admirable *Hymn*, which our Church has adopted into her Offices, and with which she daily nourishes the Devotion of her Children?

Luke 2. 37, 38.

V. 29.

Q. What may we learn from this Hymn we so frequently repeat?

A. That though we cannot see our Saviour with our bodily Eyes, as *Simeon* did, yet he being daily in the holy Scriptures presented to the Eyes of our Faith, we ought to thank God for that wonderful Salvation he has prepared both for *Jew* and *Gentile*. That we must never think of dying in peace, till we have embraced our Saviour with our Understandings and Affections; till we heartily believe what he revealed, and sincerely practise what he taught. That nothing will stand us in stead in a dying Hour, and support us when all earthly Comforts forsake us, but the remembrance of a well-spent Life; and the performance of those Conditions upon which Salvation is promised.

Q. What does this great Honour bestowed upon Simeon and Anna teach us?

A. Constantly and devoutly to attend the Ordinances of our Religion; not to neglect those means God has established for the building us up in his holy Faith. For if we fervently persevere, God will abundantly communicate his Grace and Favour towards us.

Q. What

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. To dedicate the *Vigour* of our *Youth*, and the *Flower* of our *Days* to the *practise* of *Religion*, because as it is the properest and most necessary season to receive the impressions of *Piety* and *Virtue*, so it is then most acceptable to *God*, the perfection of whose *Nature* requires that we should offer up to him the *prime* of our *Age*, and the *Excellency* of our *Strength*. To purifie our selves both in *Body* and *Soul*; and to practise that *Obedience* which our *Saviour* and the blessed *Virgin* taught by their *Example*. To return to *God* whatever we receive from him, and to make an entire *Sacrifice* to his *Majesty* of what is most dear and precious to us. Not to despise, but respect the *Poor*, who in their outward *Circumstances* bear so great a resemblance to the blessed *Jesus*, and his holy *Family*. To bless *God* that he has manifested to us the *Consolation of Israel*, to give *Light* to us that sate in *Darkness*, and in the *Shadow of Death*, and to guide our *Feet* into the way of *Peace*. Above all, to cloath our selves with *Humility*, to be meek and lowly in *Heart*, that we may find rest for our *Souls*.

Q. Is *Humility* particularly a *Christian Vertue*?

A. The *Heathen Philosophers* were so little acquainted with this *Vertue*, that they had no Name for it; what they exprest by the word we now use, was *Meanness* and *Baseness* of *Mind*, which provoked their *Contempt* and *Anger* rather than *Applause*: And the *Jews* so valued themselves upon their *Privileges*, that they were too apt to contemn the rest of *Mankind*. Our

L

Saviour

Saviour first taught it in its greatest perfection, and indeed his whole Life was but so many repeated Instances of *Humility* and wonderful Condescension for our sakes : He begins his Divine Sermon upon the Mount with this Precept, he lays it as the Foundation of our spiritual Building, without which we cannot discharge our Duty either to God or Man.

Q. Wherein consists the Humility of a Christian?

A. In not thinking better of himself than he deserves, in having a just sense of all his Weaknesses and Defects, which will create a low and mean Opinion of himself; and in condescending to the meanest Offices for the good of his Fellow-Christians. For thus our Saviour made himself to us a Pattern of this Vertue, by taking upon him our frail Nature, and by suffering the greatest Affronts and Indignities, and Pains of this Life, in order to shew us the way to Heaven, and thereby to open to us the Gates of Everlasting Life. It restrains the immoderate desire of Honour, by teaching us not to exalt our selves, nor to do any thing thro' Strife or Vain-glory. It makes us rejoyce in the Excellencies of our Brethren, and sincerely congratulate those Abilities that entitle them to a greater share of Value and Esteem than we can pretend to. The difficulty of this Vertue proceeds from that Self-love which is planted in our Natures, and when indulged will be too apt to deceive us in the Judgment we form concerning our selves.

Q. How is Humility the Foundation of other Christian Vertues?

A. It makes us ready to believe what God reveals, from the sense of our own Meanness and his

his Excellency : And by removing the great Obstacle of our *Faith* ; which is a Vanity to distinguish our selves from the unthinking Croud. *How can we believe when we receive Honour one of another, and seek not the Honour that cometh from God only ?* It makes us put our Hope and Confidence in God, because being weak and miserable of our selves, *without him we can do nothing.* It increases our Love to God, by making us sensible how unworthy we are of the least of those many Favours we receive from him. It teaches us to rejoyce in the Prosperity of our Neighbour, by infusing the most favourable Opinion of his Worth. It disposes us to relieve those Wants, and compassionate those Afflictions which we our selves have deserved. It makes us patient under all the Troubles and Calamities of Life, because we have provoked God by our Sins. Our Prayers and our Fasts will find no acceptance except they proceed from an humble Mind, and our best Works will stand us in little stead, if they are stained with Pride and Vain-glory.

Q. Wherein consists the Exercise of Humility ?

A. In avoiding to publish our own Praises, or to beg the Praises of others, by giving them a handle to commend us. In not placing too much Pleasure and Satisfaction in hearing the good things that are said of us, because they are often rather the effect of Civility and Charity, than of what we deserve. In doing nothing on purpose to draw the Eyes and good Opinion of Men, but purely to please God. In bearing the Reproaches, the Injuries and Affronts of bad Men with Patience and Meekness ; the

Reproofs of our Friends with Thankfulness. In not contemning others tho' inferiour to us in some Advantages of Body or Mind, but being ready to give them that Honour and Praise they justly deserve. In pitying and compassionating the Sins and Follies of our Fellow-Christians, it being the effect of God's Grace that we are not overcome by the same Temptations. In carrying our selves with great Respect to our Superiours, with Courtesie and Affability to our Inferiours, and submitting to the lowest Offices for the Service of our Neighbour. In receiving from the Hands of God all Afflictions and Trials with entire Resignation and Submission, as Offenders under the hand of Justice.

Q. Wherein appears the Folly of Pride?

A. In that we value our selves very frequently upon things that add no true worth to us, that neither make us better or wiser; that are in their own nature perishable, and of which we are not Proprietors but Stewards. Or if the things be valuable in themselves, they are God's immediate Work in us, and to be proud of them is the surest way to lose them. Thus to overlook our Defects hinders us from making any farther Improvement; and the being possessed with an Opinion we deserve more than we have, eats out all the Pleasure of our present Enjoyments. Besides, the proud Man misses the very End he aimed at; for instead of Honour and Applause, he meets with Contempt and Ignominy.

Q. What are the best Helps to attain Humility?

A. To remember that all the Advantages we enjoy either of Body or Mind above others, are
not

not the effect of our Merit but of God's Bounty. That those whom we are apt to contemn, are valuable in the sight of God, the only Fountain of true Honour. That by having consented to Sin, we have committed the most shameful Action imaginable, the most contrary to Justice and right Reason, and to all sort of Decency; and that as long as we are cloathed with Flesh and Blood, we are still liable to the same Offences against the Majesty of Heaven and Earth. To suppress all proud and vain Thoughts when they first arise in our Minds, not to suffer them to sport in the Scene of our Imagination. To keep a constant Watch over our Words and Actions, that we may check the first Tendencies to Pride.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

A Almighty and everliving God, I humbly beseech thy Majesty, that as thy only begotten Son was this Day presented in the Temple in substance of our Flesh; so I may be presented unto thee with a pure and clean Heart, by the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

II.

A Almighty and Everlasting God, Heavenly Father, I give thee humble Thanks, that thou hast vouchsafed to call me to the knowledge of thy Grace and Faith in thee. Increase this Knowledge, and confirm this Faith in me evermore. Grant me thy Holy Spirit, that
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I may devote my self entirely to thy Service; that I may be cleanted from all my Sins, and serve thee with a quiet Mind, and in thy due time may be made Partaker of everlasting Salvation; thro' Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God World without end. *Amen.*

III.

GRant, O Lord, that I may constantly attend the publick Institutions of thy holy Religion; that I may never neglect those means which thou hast established for the purifying my corrupt Nature, and for the reforming whatever is amiss in the Frame and Temper of my Mind: That I may approach thy Presence with Humility and Devotion, hear thy Word with Reverence and Attention, receive the holy Sacrament with Faith, Thanksgiving, and Charity; that by these Ordinances of thy Appointment my Soul may be nourish'd with all Goodness, and in such a measure prepared for that Salvation which the blessed Jesus has purchased, that I may depart in Peace, and in the Faith and Fear of God's Elect; thro' the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

IV.

Bp. Taylor.

O Holy and Eternal Jesus, who didst by thy Precepts, and by thy own Example, engrave Humility into the Spirits of thy Disciples, and into the Laws of Christianity; make me to imitate thy gracious Condescensions. Take from me all Vanity and phantastick Complacency in my own Person and Actions; and when there arises a Reputation consequent to the performance

mance of any part of my Duty, make me to reflect the Glory upon thee, suffering nothing to adhere to my own Spirit, but Shame at my own Imperfections, and Thankfulness to thee for all thy Assistances: Let me never seek the Praise of Men from unhandsome Actions, from Flatteries and unworthy Discourses; nor entertain the Praise with delight, tho' it proceed from better Principles; but fear and tremble lest I deserve Punishment, or lose a Reward which thou hast deposited for all them that seek thy Glory, and despise their own, that they may imitate the Example of their Lord. Thou, O Lord, didst triumph over Sin and Death; subdue also my proud Understanding and my prouder Affections, and bring me under thy Yoak; that I may do thy Work, and obey my Superiors, and be a Servant of all my Brethren in their Necessities, and esteem my self inferior to all Men by a deep sense of my own Unworthiness, and in all things may obey thy Laws, and conform to thy Example, and enter into thy Inheritance, O Holy and Eternal Jesus. *Amen.*

C H A P. XIII.

St. Matthias, the Apostle.

February 24.

Q. **W**hat Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?

A. The Commemoration of the Apostle St. Matthias.

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Q. What

Q. What is meant by an Apostle?

A. In general it signifies no more than a *Messenger*, a Person sent upon some especial Errand, for the Discharge of some peculiar Affair in his Name that sent him: But was fix'd by our Saviour to a particular use, applying it to those select Persons whom he made choice of, to be sent up and down the World in his Name, to plant the *Faith*, to govern the *Church* at present, and by their wise and prudent Settlement of Affairs, to provide for the future Exegincies of it.

Q. Why did our Saviour pitch upon the Number of Twelve?

A. Various have been the Conjectures of the *Ancients* upon this Subject. What seems most probable is, that our Saviour might allude herein to the Twelve *Patriarchs* as the Founders of their several Tribes; or to the Twelve *Chief Heads* and Rulers of those Tribes, of which the Body of the *Jewish Nation* did consist. To this our Saviour gives some Countenance himself, in *Mat. 19. 28.* saying, *when the Son of Man shall sit in the Throne of his Glory, his Apostles should sit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel.*

Q. What was their Vocation?

Acts 1. 22. *A.* To be Witnesses of Christ's Miracles, particularly his Resurrection; and to preach that Doctrine to the World which they learnt of their Master; and in this their Testimony was valuable, that they sealed the Truth of it with their Blood.

Q. How were the Apostles enabled to discharge this high Office, being obscure and illiterate Persons, helpless and unarmed, and having the enrag'd Powers of the World to contend with?

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A. They immediately received the Doctrine they taught from the Mouth of *Christ* himself. They were infallibly secured from Errors, in delivering the Principles of Christianity, and to this end had the *Spirit of Truth* promised to them, who should guide them into all Truth. They had been Eye-witnesses of all the Material Passages of our Saviour's Life, and reported nothing but what they had seen with their own Eyes, and of the Truth whereof they were as competent Judges as the acutest *Philosopher* in the World. Besides, several miraculous Powers and Gifts of the *Holy Ghost* were conferred upon them, as the readiest means to procure their Religion a firm Belief and Entertainment in the Minds of Men. Joh. 16. 13. Joh. 1. 1.

Q. Was St. Matthias among the Twelve Apostles that were chosen by our Saviour?

A. No: He obtained this great Honour upon the Vacancy made in the College of the Apostles, Acts 1. 25, by the Death of *Judas Iscariot*; whose covetous temper having prevailed upon him to betray his Master for thirty pieces of Silver, was so touch'd with the Horror of that wicked Fact, that after having cast back the Wages of Iniquity in open Court, he made away with himself, and was remarkably punish'd in the Manner of his Death, Acts 1. 18. for falling headlong he burst asunder in the midst, and all his Bowels gushed out.

Q. Had this Judas the Gifts of an Apostle?

A. Tho' he was a Man of vile and corrupt Designs, yet he was immediately called by *Christ*, equally empowered and commissioned with the rest to preach and work Miracles, was numbred with the *Apostles*, and obtained part of their Acts 1. 17. Ministry.

Q. What

Q. *What may we learn from hence?*

A. That the Wickedness of a Minister does not evacuate his Commission, nor render his Office useless or ineffectual. And that the Efficacy of an Ordinance does not depend upon the Quality of the Person, but the Divine Institution and the Blessing God has entailed upon it.

Q. *How was St. Matthias chosen to be an Apostle?*

Acts I. 26. A. He was chosen by *Lot*; a way frequently used both by *Jews* and *Gentiles* for the determining doubtful and difficult Cases, especially in the Election of Judges and Magistrates. *St. Peter* having recommended the filling of the Vacancy to the Consideration of the Christians assembled at *Jerusalem*; they appointed two, *Joseph* called *Barsabas*, who was surnamed *Justus*, and *Matthias*; and when the *Lots* were given forth, it was determined in favour of the latter, who was numbred with the *eleven* Apostles.

Q. *What preceded this manner of choice?*

V. 24. A. The Congregation of Christians made a solemn Address to God, that he would condescend to direct the Choice; and that he who knew the Hearts of all Men, would be pleased to shew which of these two he saw best qualified for so sacred a Function.

Q. *What may be learn'd from this manner of proceeding?*

A. It may serve as a Direction to all those that are *Candidates* for *Holy Orders*, seriously to examine themselves whether they are moved by the *Holy Ghost* to take upon them that Office and Ministration; for tho' they may impose upon Men, yet God sees their Hearts, and all those various

various Motives by which they are influenced in so great a Concern. This Precedent is also serviceable to the *Governours* of the Church, who after all their Care to admit Persons duly qualified, must beg God Almighty's Guidance and Direction, that they may wisely make choice of fit Labourers to work in his Vineyard; and all Christians ought to offer up the same Prayers, since the Welfare of the Church depends so much upon the Piety and Capacity of those that are ordained.

Q. How was St. Matthias qualified for the Apostleship?

A. He had been a continual Attendant upon Acts 1. 21. our Saviour all the time of his Ministry, from his being baptized by *John*, till his *Assumption* into Heaven; which is intimated by St. Peter. Acts 1. 21, He was probably one of the *Seventy Disciples*; ^{22.} and had been a Witness of our Saviour's *Resurrection* and of the most considerable Passages of his Life; so that he was fit to proclaim abroad those matters of fact concerning his *Master*, of which he had an equal Evidence with the rest of the Apostles.

Q. Where did St. Matthias preach the Gospel?

A. He continued at *Jerusalem* till the Powers of the *Holy Ghost* were conferred upon the Apostles, to enable them to discharge their difficult Employment, and then he is thought to have spent the first Fruits of his Ministry in *Judea* with great Success. He afterwards very probably travelled *Eastward*, his Residence being principally, according to St. *Jerome*, near the irruption of the River *Apfarius* and the Haven *Hyffus*. Hierom. de scrip. Eccl. He was by these barbarous People treated with great

great Rudeness and Inhumanity, and after many Labours and Sufferings in converting great numbers to Christianity, he obtained the Crown of Martyrdom.

Q. What was the manner of his Death?

A. 'Tis very uncertain: Some report that he was seized by the *Jews*, and as a Blasphemer was first stoned and then beheaded. Others that he was crucified, and that as *Judas* was hanged upon a Tree, so *Matthias* suffered upon a Cross.

Q. What Works have we of this Apostle?

A. None. The Gospel and Traditions published under his Name are rejected by learned Men as spurious, tho' *Clemens Alexandrinus* relates a Saying of his, of great use in the Life of a Christian. *That we ought to mortifie and subdue the Flesh, and maintain a continual opposition to it, by granting it nothing whereby its irregular and sensual Desires may be gratified; but that we should on the contrary nourish and fortify our Souls with Faith and Divine Knowledge.*

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. In all difficult Cases to address our selves to Heaven for Direction. To use our best Diligence, if we are Patrons of Churches, in providing Persons duly qualified for the great Trust we commit to them; and not to suffer any worldly Consideration to bias us in a Choice, of which we must one Day give a strict Account. To beware of Covetousness, the Root of all Evil, which ruined the Traytor *Judas*, and will all those that embrace that sacred Function with a regard more to the Revenues than the Duties of their Profession. To preserve our Minds free from Guilt, because it makes us restless and uneasy,

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ease, and robs us of all that Repose and Quiet which the most prosperous Condition can promise us. Constantly to attend God's Ordinances, tho' he who is called to administer may be a bad Man. To work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling, and to be watchful and upon our guard, because if an Apostle fell who had all the Advantages of our Saviour's Conversation, what Security can we promise our selves?

Q. What is implied in the Duty of Watchfulness?

A. A constant Care of our Lives and Actions; that we be always upon our guard, that we resist the first Beginnings of Evil, and discover the first Approaches of our spiritual Enemy; that we may neither be surprized by his Snares and Allurements, nor unprepared to encounter him whenever he attacks us. In short, it consists in wisely foreseeing the Dangers that threaten our Souls, and then in diligently avoiding them.

Q. How does Watchfulness foresee Dangers?

A. By discovering the Plots and Contrivances of our spiritual Adversary, by making us sensible of those Temptations we are exposed to, by reason of our Constitution, or that Profession we are engaged in, or that Company we converse with; that our Guard may be set in the right place, where we are most alarmed with Danger, and where Surprise would be most fatal. For so great is the Power of Passion and Custom, to give fair Colours to very great Disorders, so mischievous is the Complaisance of Friends and Flatterers to fortifie these wrong Notions, that except we are very watchful, we shall unavoidably be made a Prey.

Q. How does Watchfulness avoid Dangers?

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A. By making use of the fittest and properest Means to defeat those Designs of the Enemy of our Salvation which we have happily discovered. For Temptations must be resisted differently, according to their different Kinds. To this End God has provided several sorts of Grace, the use whereof is of great importance to us. When Temptations flatter our corrupt Nature, our Victory consists in Flight ; when they would discourage us with Difficulties and Dangers, we can never be Conquerors without looking them in the Face, and encountering them with Resolution. Without this Caution, the best Disposition of Mind will hardly preserve us from falling.

Q. *How does Watchfulness prepare us to encounter Dangers?*

Eph. 6.11. A. By putting on the *whole Armour of God*, and fortifying those weak Places, in which we are most likely to be attack'd. If we would not sacrifice our Conscience to establish our Fortune, we must have impress'd upon our Minds a *strong Belief* of another World, where Vertue will prevail more than Riches and Honour. If we would not be overcome by the Pleasures of Sense, we should live under a *lively Hope* of enjoying those Pleasures which are at God's right Hand for ever-

v. 14. more. We should *gird our selves with Truth* ; and then no Profit would prevail upon us to perjure our selves, and to be insincere in our Words and Promises, but we should be firm and steady in all our Actions. We should *guard our Minds with Righteousness*, and keep a Conscience void of Offence, if ever we intend to overcome the Persecutions and Sufferings we may be expos'd to, upon the Account of our Faith. We should

v. 17. put on the *Sword of the Spirit*, encounter all Temptations

Temptations with those stronger Motives which the Word of God offers to engage our Obedience, and then they would lose their Force and appear contemptible.

Q. Whence arises the Necessity of this Duty of Watchfulness?

A. From the Nature of our Condition in this World, which is surrounded with variety of Temptations, so that there is no Circumstance of Life which is entirely free from some sort of Assault or other; all our ways being strewn with Snares. From the Power and Strength of our Adversary, who is *Prince of the Air*, and wants neither Skill nor Industry to work our Ruine. From our own Frailty and Weakness, whereby we have no Power of our selves to help our selves; and from the Danger of our Overthrow, whereby we become liable to the Miseries of a sad Eternity.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

O Almighty God, who into the Place of the Traitor *Judas* didst choose thy faithful Servant St. *Matthias* to be of the number of the twelve Apostles; Grant that thy Church being always preserved from false Apostles, may be ordered and guided by faithful and true Pastors, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

O God, who knowest me to be set in the midst of so many and great Dangers, that by reason of the Frailty of my Nature, I cannot always

ways stand upright; Grant to me such Strength and Protection, as may support me in all Dangers, and carry me thro' all Temptations, thro' Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

III.

O God, who feest I have no Power of my self to help my self; that I am not wise enough for my own Direction, nor able enough for my own Defence; Let me acknowledge thee in all my Ways, and not lean to my own Understanding. Let thy Light guide me, thy Providence protect me, thy Grace enable me, that I may faithfully discharge all the Publick and Private Duties thou shalt think fit to call me to; that being thus armed with thy Defence, I may be preserved from all Dangers, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

IV.

O God, who art the Author and Giver of all that I enjoy, moderate my Affections to the things of this World, that I may not pursue them with an eager and unsatiable Desire. Let no greediness of Gain tempt me to the least Injustice, either by Fraud or Oppression, but that I may commit my self to thy Providence in the use of honest and lawful Endeavours, and not torment my self with anxious Care about the Success. Suffer not the Concerns of this Life to make me negligent in the Concernments of much greater Importance; that while I am supporting a dying Body, I may remember I have an immortal Soul, which infinitely deserves my chiefest Care. And as for those good things thou hast been pleased to bestow upon me, teach me to
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enjoy them with Thankfulness and Charity, and readily to part with them rather than to forsake thy Truth, or to make Shipwreck of a good Conscience. That being delivered from the covetous Temper of the Traitor *Judas*, I may escape those Sins which such vile Affections lead to, and that Punishment which he felt, and those deserve; and this I beg for Jesus Christ his sake. *Amen.*

C H A P. XIV.

The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. March 25.

Q. *What is meant by the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, which the Church this Day celebrates?*

A. The Declaration the Angel *Gabriel* made Luke 1.31. to the Blessed *Virgin Mary*, that she should be Mother of our *Lord Jesus Christ*; that this her Son should be Great, and called the Son of the Highest; that the Lord God should give unto him the Throne of his Father *David*; that he should reign over the House of *Jacob* for ever; and that of his Kingdom there shall be no end.

Q. *What does this Description made by the Angel Gabriel refer to?*

A. To the Prophecy of *Isaiah* concerning the Chap 9. 6. *Messias*, who foretold, That the Government should be upon his Shoulder, and his Name should be called Wonderful, Counsellour, the
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mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; of the increase of his Government and Peace there should be no end, upon the Throne of *David*, and upon his Kingdom, to order it and to establish it with Judgment and with Justice, from henceforth even for ever.

Q. What is the Importance of the Angel's Description of the Messiah?

A. That God should settle upon the *Messias* a Spiritual Kingdom (of which that Temporal of *David* was but an imperfect representation) the absolute Government of the Church, that spiritual House of *Jacob*; and that this Kingdom of his shall continue for ever, shall never be destroyed, as the Kingdom of the *Jews* was to be.

Q. What preceded this Declaration?

Luke 1.28. A. The Salutation made to the Blessed Virgin by the same *Angel*, in those words, *Hail thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among Women.*

Q. What was the meaning of this Salutation?

A. That the *Blessed Virgin* was most excellently disposed to receive the greatest Honour that ever was done to the Daughters of Men; her Employment being holy and pious, her Body chaste, and her Soul adorned with all Vertues; particularly with *Humility*, which is in the sight of God of great price; for tho' she was to be the Mother of an universal and everlasting Blessing, which all former Ages had desir'd, and all future times should rejoyce in; yet she resigns all this Glory to him that gave it her, and declares whence she received it, that not her Name but his might have the Glory.

Q. How

Q. How did the Blessed Virgin receive this Salutation?

A. She was troubled at the Saying of the v. 29. Angel, and cast in her Mind what manner of Salutation it should be; judging her self unworthy of so great an Honour, and being surprized with the strangeness of such an appearance in her Retirement. But when the Angel positively affirmed that she should conceive and bring forth the *Messias*; she enquires how that could be, since she knew not a Man.

Q. What is implied in this Answer of the Blessed Virgin?

A. No Doubt, I think, concerning the thing, nor any Diffidence in respect to the issue of it; but rather Admiration in respect to the wonderful manner of effecting it. And if we have any regard to the Tradition mentioned by *Epiphanius*, that *Joseph* was old when espoused to the *blessed Virgin*, 'twill be probable what many of the *Ancients* believed, that by this Answer, the Virgin seems to hint at some Resolution of continuing in a state of perpetual Virginity; at least it implies that she desired to be satisfied in the manner as well as in the matter of this Mystery.

Q. How did the Angel answer the difficulty she suggested?

A. By declaring the wonderful manner how his Message should be brought about, viz. *That v. 35. the Holy Ghost should come upon her, and that the Power of the Higbest should overshadow her.* By furnishing her with an Example of somewhat of like nature in her Cousin *Elizabeth*; and by confirming her from the Power of God, to which nothing is impossible.

Q. What effect had this upon the blessed Virgin?

A. She demonstrated an entire Faith and perfect Obedience in her Reply. Behold the Handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy Word. Neither is it to be doubted, but that upon her Consent and Desire, the Promise began to be fulfilled, and the Son of God became incarnate, and was made Man, taking upon him humane Nature, Body and Soul.

Q. How does the Blessed Virgin express her Joy and Gratitude upon this occasion?

A. In that admirable Hymn called the Magnificat, wherein she shews such a thankful sense of the great Honour that was conferred upon her, and expresses at the same time, in so full a manner, her Humility and Devotion, as well as the infinite Power and Goodness of God, that it appears, as she was highly favoured, so she was also full of Grace, and had a Mind plentifully enrich'd with the Gifts of God's Holy Spirit. This Hymn was so respected among the Primitive Christians, that they used it as a part of their Devotions; and the Church of England has retain'd it in her Divine Service, as proper to express the pious Affections of godly and devout Minds.

Q. What may we learn from this Hymn we so frequently repeat?

A. The infinite Mercy and Goodness of God in sending his Son into the World to redeem us from a state of Sin and Misery when we were Enemies to him by our evil Works. That all the Faculties of our Souls, our Reason, our Will and our Affections, ought to be employed in blessing and praising his holy Name; and tho' we cannot add to his Greatness, yet we are then

said

said to *magnifie the Lord*, when we publish and proclaim to the World our sense of his mighty Perfections. That the best Method to engage God's Favour, is to govern all our Actions by a fear to offend him. That to obtain the Blessings of Heaven we must have a great sense of our want of them. That we may advance our selves into the Rank of those that had the great Honour of being related to our Saviour, by conceiving Christ in our Hearts by Faith and Obedience, for by *doing the Will of God*, we are esteemed by *Mat. 12. 50.* him as his *Brethren, Sisters, and Mother.*

Q. Has this Festival only a Relation to the blessed Virgin Mary?

A. It has farther a particular respect to the *Incarnation* of our blessed Saviour; who being the *Eternal Word* of the Father, was at this time made *Flesh*. And thus this Festival is by *Arbanaſius* reckon'd as one of the chiefest that relate to our Lord; whether we consider the Order and Method of those things that the *Evangelists* declare concerning our Saviour; or the profound Mystery we this Day celebrate.

Q. What are we to believe concerning the Incarnation?

A. That the Son, which is the Word of the *Artic. 2.* Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one Substance with the Father; took Man's Nature in the Womb of the blessed Virgin, of her Substance; so that two whole and perfect Natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one Person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very Man; who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a Sacrifice not only

for Original Guilt, but also for the Actual Sins of Men.

Q. What do you mean by the Godhead and Manhood being joined together in one Person, whereof is one Christ?

A. The true Design of the Church, in using the word *Person*, was to express a *Vital Substantial Union*; as that thence did result a true proper communication of Names, Characters, and Properties, from the *two Natures* to the *Person* made up of them. For tho' the *Eternal Word* was a *Person* before the *Incarnation*, yet he is not considered under the same formal Notion after it. Before he subsisted only in the *Divine Nature*, afterwards in the *Humane* as well as the *Divine*; yet without any change or alteration, but under both respects continues but one and the same *Person*.

Q. But are there not many Difficulties and Absurdities that flow from attributing the Actions, Passions and Properties of two such distinct Natures as the Humane and Divine to the same Subject, viz. our blessed Saviour?

A. Tho' they are absolutely inconsistent in themselves, and cannot be affirmed of the *same Nature*, yet they may and must be averred of the *same Person*, who is made up of both. And this will plainly appear, if we consider it in Persons compounded of two distinct parts, as Men made of *Body* and *Soul*. Eating, drinking and walking, are performed chiefly by the Ministry of the *Body*; knowing, considering, willing, and chusing, proceed from the *Soul*; yet it is the *Person* made up of both, who is said to eat and drink, to understand and chuse. Thus Colour, Features, and Symmetry, from whence arises Beauty, cannot

cannot be in the Soul, which is immaterial; Learning and Vertue, Wisdom and Righteousness, cannot inhere in the Body, because being Matter, it is not a Subject capable of them; for which reason 'twould be absurd to say, the Soul is white or black, beautiful or deformed; or on the other hand, to say the Body is wise or foolish, learned or ignorant, just or unjust; yet of the Man who is made up of both these parts, all these may be truly and properly affirmed. This being remembred, 'twill help us to solve the seeming Difficulties and Absurdities, of attributing the Actions, Passions, and Properties of two such *distinct Natures* as the Humane and Divine to the same Subject, *viz.* our blessed Saviour.

Q. *Why is the blessed Virgin Mary stiled the Mother of God?*

A. Because the second Person in the blessed Trinity, the Son of God, by virtue of an eternal Generation, vouchsafed to descend from Heaven, and to stoop so low as to enter into the Womb of the Virgin; where being united to our Nature, which was formed and conceived there; he submitted to a second Generation according to the Flesh. So that this Son of God, was truly the Son of the Virgin, and consequently she that brought forth the Man, was really the Mother of God; and by her Cousin *Elizabeth* she is stiled Luke 1. 43. the *Mother of her Lord*, which word *Lord* was counted equivalent to the word *God*.

Q. *But can the Divine Nature be born, and suffer, and die, and be buried and rise from the Grave?*

A. No, it cannot; and so wild a Thought has always been disclaimed by all Orthodox Christi-

ans, with the utmost abhorrence and detestation. But this they have said, that he was *God*, that was made of a Woman, who was seen and handled; who was arraigned, condemned, and crucified; and afterwards laid in the Grave; not indeed in his *Divine* but *Humane Nature*; but it was *one* and the *same Person* which subsisted in both Natures.

Q. What Instances are there in Scripture that justify the manner of these Expressions?

John 1.27, 30. A. John Baptist says, that he who cometh after me, was before me; which could not be true if affirmed of the *same Nature*, but yet was verified of the *same Person*. *St. Peter* affirms, *Mat. 16.13, 16. That the Son of Man was the Christ, the Son of the living God.* *Christ* avers of himself, That he was the *Son of God*, truly and properly, as his words were understood by his Friends and Enemies. The Apostles still preach the same Doctrine, that the Church was purchased with *Acts 20.28. the Blood of God.* That the Man whom the *1 Cor. 2.8. Jews* crucified, was the *Lord of Glory.* The *same Lord* who was nailed to a Cross, was afterwards laid in the Grave and rose from thence; and this *Lord was God.*

Q. It being sufficient, as to the Mystery of the Incarnation, that when our Saviour was conceived and born, his Mother was a Virgin; what is reasonable to believe concerning her continuing in the same state of Virginity?

A. The peculiar Eminency, and unparallel'd Privilege of that Mother; the special Honour and Reverence due unto that Son, and ever paid by her; the regard of that Holy Ghost that came upon her; the singular Goodness and Piety of Joseph to whom she was espoused; have persuaded

suaded the Church of God in all Ages to believe, that she still continued in the same Virginity, and therefore is to be acknowledged the *ever Virgin Mary*.

Q. How ought we to reverence the blessed Virgin Mary?

A. By entertaining a great Opinion of her Vertue and Piety, who had that great Honour of being the Mother of the *Messiah*. It being reasonable to believe, that a Person chose for that purpose was endowed with great Excellencies; and the rather, because she maintained so lively a Sense of her own Unworthiness to receive so great an Honour, and when she was advanced to be the Mother of the World's Saviour, seeks no greater Title, than to be stiled *Handmaid of the Lord*. But not to invoke her; Luke 1.38. because we are directed in Scripture to offer up all our Prayers in the Name, and thro' the Mediation of Jesus Christ only; besides, the Church of God in the three first Ages, makes no mention of it; neither are there any Footsteps of that Practice to be found among them.

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. To admire and adore the great Goodness of God manifested in the Incarnation of the Eternal Word; thereby shewing that he thought nothing too great nor too dear to part with for our sakes; and the wonderful Humility and Condescension of our Saviour, who stoop'd so low when he undertook the Work of our Redemption. To express great Modesty and Confusion when we meet with the Praises and Applause of the best of Men, from a true Sense of our own Unworthiness, and by Silence and Fear
to

to guard our selves from Vanity. To endeavour to answer the Design of our Saviour's being made Man, that we might become like unto God, and be made Partakers of the Divine Nature; and that Christ might be formed in us, and that we might put on the Lord Jesus Christ, by making no Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof. That as he was pleased to be united to our Nature, so we may make it the great Care and Business of our Lives to be really and spiritually united to him.

Q. How are Christians united to Christ?

A. This Union is formed by *Baptism*, when they are made Members of Christ's *Mystical Body the Church*, whereof he is the Head, and wherein they profess to believe what he has revealed, and to perform what he has commanded, and engage to govern their Lives by that Gospel he has publish'd to the World. And all the Metaphors in Scripture that describe this Relation, plainly refer to their being Members of the Christian Church. Now this Union is farther maintained by preserving Communion with the Church, in Prayers, and in the Sacrament, and by living in a regular Subjection to, and strict Union with our spiritual Governours the Bishops and Presbyters, Christ's Representatives here upon Earth.

Q. Does this outward and visible Profession convey to us all the Privileges of being Members of Christ?

A. By being made Members of the *Christian Church*, we are in some measure entitled to all those Privileges that are derived from Christ our Head; but yet we can never be made effectually Partakers of them, except we perform those

those Conditions upon which those great Blessings were promised ; we must be true to our *Baptismal Covenant*, we must renounce all Sins, which are the Works of the Devil, and those false and corrupt Maxims which govern the World, and mortifie the sinful Lusts of the Flesh ; we must subject our Understandings to the Obedience of Faith, and keep God's Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the Days of our Lives, if ever we pretend to be really united to our Saviour, and expect the benefit of such a spiritual Relation.

Q. What are the great Privileges that result from this Union, from our being living Members of Christ's mystical Body ?

A. The gracious Promises of Pardon and Forgiveness of Sin upon our true Repentance. The Assistance of God's blessed Spirit, and the Influences of his Grace to enable us to work out our Salvation. The Benefit of Christ's Intercession in Heaven, where he is an Advocate for us with the Father. A share in all those Promises of Care and Protection made to the Church. And, to encourage our Perseverance, an Inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away ; for tho' all Mankind are in the Hands of God's unlimited Goodness, yet his covenanted Mercies are the peculiar Lot and Portion of Christians, the Members of Christ's mystical Body.

The PRAYERS.

I.

I Beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy Grace into my Heart, that as I have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the Message of an Angel; so by his Cross and Passion I may be brought unto the Glory of his Resurrection, thro' the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

I Desire, O Lord, to bless and praise thy infinite Goodness, which took Compassion upon Mankind in his greatest Misery; and has provided so admirable a Remedy by sending thy only begotten Son into the World to recover our corrupt and degenerate Nature; and by the Purity of his Doctrine, the Example of his Life, and the Sacrifice of his Death, to purchase eternal Happiness for us, and to direct and lead us into the way to it. All Glory be to our great Redeemer and Saviour, who came down from Heaven, that he might carry us thither, and took Humane Nature upon him, that we thereby might be made Partakers of a Divine Nature, and humbled himself to Death, even the Death of the Cross, that he might exalt us to Glory and Honour. Unto him that was as upon this Day incarnate, to our Lord Jesus Christ, who has loved us, and taken our Nature upon him, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father, to him be Honour and Praise, Dominion and Power now and for ever. *Amen.*

III. Grant

III.

GRant, O Lord, by the Assistance of thy Grace, that I may most heartily comply with those great things which thou hast done and designed for my Salvation: Teach me readily to obey thee, as the Angels do in Heaven: Give me Purity and Piety, Prudence and Modesty; those Vertues which made the blessed Virgin so highly favoured: That my Employment may be always holy, that my Affections may not be set upon this World; that as much as my Condition of Life will bear, I may frequently retire both from the Business and Enjoyments of it: That by Prayer and Meditation I may have my Conversation above: That by believing the Gospel of Christ I may entertain him in my Heart, and by Obedience to his Laws publish him to the World: That he may dwell in me for ever, and that I may for ever dwell with him above, in Mansions of Glory to all Eternity.
Amen.

C H A P. XV.

**Easter-Sunday. A Moveable
Feast.**

Q. *What Festival does the Church this Day observe?*

A. *The Great Festival of the Anniversary Commemoration of our Saviour's Resurrection. Which for its Antiquity and Excellency challenges*

lenges the precedence of all other *Festivals*?

Q. *How ancient is the Observation of this Festival?*

A. As ancient as the very times of the Apostles, as is clear to those that are conversant in the Affairs of the Primitive Church. In those purer Times the only Dispute being not about the thing, but the particular Time when the Festival was to be kept.

Q. *What was the state of the Controversie about keeping Easter?*

A. The Asiatick Churches kept their Easter upon the same Day the Jews observed their Passover, viz. the fourteenth Day of their first Month, chiefly answering our March; and this they did upon what Day of the Week soever it fell: And from hence they were stiled *Quarto-Decimans*; keeping Easter upon the 14th Day after the appearance of the Moon. The other Churches, especially those of the West, kept Easter upon the Lord's Day following the Jewish Passover. These latter pleaded Apostolical Tradition, the Asiatics the Practice of the Apostles themselves.

Q. *When was this Controversie determined?*

A. In the great Oecumenical Council of Nice, assembled by the Emperor Constantine; wherein it was ordained, that Easter should be kept upon one and the same Day throughout the World, not according to the Custom of the Jews, but upon the Lord's Day; which Decree was ratified and published by the Imperial Letters to all the Churches.

Q. *What are we Christians obliged to believe concerning the Resurrection of Jesus Christ?*

A. That

A. That the Eternal Son of God, who was crucified and died for our Sins, did not long continue in the state of Death; but on the third Day by his infinite Power did revive and raise himself, by re-uniting the same Soul to the same Body which was buried, and so rose the same Man.

Q. *What Proof is there of our Saviour's Resurrection from the Dead?*

A. The Testimony of sufficient and credible Witnesses, which is the only Evidence a Matter of Fact is capable of receiving. And then a Witness may be said to be sufficient and credible, when he is thoroughly informed concerning the Fact of which he testifies, and is faithful in the relation of it.

Q. *What Testimony have we of our Saviour's Resurrection?*

A. The pious Women, which thought with Mark 16. 1. sweet Spices to have anointed him dead, found Mat. 28. 9. him alive. The Apostles, who convers'd with him frequently after his Resurrection, were satisfied he had a real Body, by his eating and John 21. drinking with them. St. Thomas did not believe, till he had searched the Holes that the 20. 27. Nails had made in his Hands, and thrust his Finger into his Side. The rest of the Disciples testify the same; to whom he also appeared, even to five hundred Brethren at once. Af- 1 Cor. 15. ter that he was seen of James; appeared to 6. 7. St. Stephen at his Martyrdom, and to St. Paul Acts 7. 55. at his Conversion. 9. 5.

Q. *'Tis plain the Witnesses were thoroughly informed in the Matter of Fact, how does it appear they were faithful in relating it?*

A. They being plain illiterate Persons, 'tis unlikely

unlikely they should be skilled in the Art of deceiving ; besides the Doctrine they taught forbad all Falshood upon pain of Damnation ; so that the sealing the Truth of this Fact with their Blood, is a sufficient Evidence of their Sincerity.

Q. The Testimony of an Adversary, is of great force ; do his Enemies any way confirm this Truth ?

A. Those Soldiers that watched at the Sepulchre, and pretended to keep his Body from the Hands of the Apostles ; they which felt the Earth trembling under them, and saw the Countenance of an Angel like Lightning, and his Raiment white as snow ; they who upon this sight did shake, and became as dead Men, while he whom they kept became alive ; even some of these came into the City, and shewed unto the chief Priests all the things that were done.

Q. Is there any farther Testimony in this case than that of Men ?

A. Yes ; the Angels bare evidence to the truth of it. One came and rolled back the Stone from the Dore, and sat upon it, saith St. Matthew : Two, saith St. John, in white sitting the one at the Head and the other at the Feet, where the Body of Jesus had lain, said unto the Women, why seek you the living among the dead, he is not here but is risen.

Q. Why did not our Saviour appear to the whole Jewish Nation for their Conviction, as well as to his Followers ?

A. Because it was only of absolute necessity, that those who were to be the first Publishers of the Gospel, should have the utmost Evidence and

and satisfaction concerning the Truth and Reality of *Christ's Resurrection*; for by the same Reason that he was obliged to have appeared to the *Jewish Nation*, it may be proved, that the whole *Roman Empire* ought to have had the same advantage, and that he should have shewn himself to all the several succeeding Ages of the World. Moreover, the *Jews* by their malicious Resistance of the Evidence of our Saviour's Miracles, even of the greatest, of raising *Lazarus* from the Dead, had made themselves unworthy and incapable of so extraordinary a way of Conviction; and for their obstinate Infidelity joyned with their cruel usage of the Son of God, were determined for Objects of God's Wrath.

Q. *Why was it necessary Christ should rise from the dead?*

A. To shew the Debt he died for was discharged, and that his Satisfaction was accepted. *If Christ be not risen, ye are yet in your Sins.* 1 Cor. 15. And moreover, to prove himself to be the *Messiah*, and to evidence the Truth and Divinity of his Doctrine; he had appealed to it as a sign of his being a true Prophet; and therefore by the way of Trial, which God prescribed the *Jews*, *Mat. 12. 38, 39, &c.* viz. the accomplishment of Predictions, he had appeared to be a false Prophet had he failed in it. *Deut. 18. 21, 22.* So that if Christ be not risen, your Faith is vain. God having raised our Saviour from the dead, after he was condemned and put to Death, for calling himself the Son of God; is a demonstration, that he really was the Son of God; and if he was the Son of God, the Doctrine he taught was true and from God.

N

Q. How

Q. How long did Jesus Christ abide in the state of the Dead?

A. He rose the third Day, before his Body saw Corruption.

Q. How can our Saviour be said to have been three Days and three Nights in the Heart of the Earth, when there were only part of two Days, and one entire Day between?

A. That is three Days, according to the common Computation of Days, both ancient and modern, and particularly in Scripture-reckoning. Thus Lazarus is said to be four Days dead, tho' the fourth Day whereon he was raised was one of them. Eight Days are said to be accomplished for Christ's Circumcision, but the Day of his Birth and Circumcision too, went both into that Reckoning.

Q. How is the Resurrection of Christ an Argument of our Resurrection?

A. Because by his rising from the dead he became the First-fruits of them that slept; which First-fruits among the Jews were a Pledge and Earnest of a future Harvest. And this secures our Resurrection to Eternal Life, that he who hath promised to raise us up, did raise himself from the dead. We are the Members of that Body of which Christ is the Head; if the Head be risen, the Members cannot be far behind.

Q. Wherein shall the Blessedness of the Resurrection of good Christians consist?

A. In the mighty Change which shall be made in their vile and mortal Bodies, and the glorious Qualities they shall be invested withal. And in the consequent Happiness of the whole Man, of the Soul and Body united and purified.

Q. How

Q. How did the Primitive Christians chiefly express their Joy upon this Festival?

A. It was famous for Works of Mercy and Charity. The *Emperors* were wont by their *Imperial Orders* to release Prisoners, unless they were detained for very hainous Crimes. And all the rest of the People, both of Clergy and Laity, strove to contribute largely and liberally to the Poor; that such as begg'd Relief might be able to rejoyce, when the common Fountain of our Mercies was remember'd, and herein they are fit Patterns for our Imitation.

Q. What may we learn from the Commemoration of our Saviour's Resurrection?

A. To establish our selves in the Belief of his holy Religion, which receives the utmost Confirmation by his Resurrection. To quicken our Repentance, since we are now assured, that he has made full Satisfaction for our Sins, and that by believing in him we may obtain Remission of them, and the Justification of our Persons. To rise from the Death of Sin to the Life of Righteousness, that being qualified with the Graces of God's Holy Spirit, we may be meet to be accounted *Children of the Resurrection*. To live under a lively Sense of that Happiness he has completely purchas'd for us by rising from the dead. To set our Affections upon things above; to breathe after that state of unspeakable and endless Joy, that perfect Freedom from Sin and Misery.

Q. What do you mean by seeking and setting our Affections upon things above?

A. Such a frequent and serious Consideration of that happy and glorious State which is prepared for good Men in another World, as may

engage our constant and sincere Endeavours in obtaining it. Such a Conviction of the Exoellency of those Heavenly Joys as may determine our Wills to prefer them before all the Honours and Riches of this World ; and wing all the Faculties of our Souls to the swiftest Prosecution of them.

Q. When may we be said to set our Affections on things above?

A. When we govern all our Actions with a respect to the next Life, and make it our great Business to please God, who is the first and chiefest Good ; For our Fruit must be unto Holiness, before our End can be Everlasting Life. When we have a low and mean Opinion of the Enjoyments of this World, in comparison of those of the next ; and are ready to part with what is most dear to us to secure our Eternal Inheritance. When we are zealous and industrious in doing all the good we can, and bear all the Miseries and Calamities of Life with Patience and Resignation, without Murmuring, without Despondency, because they are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed. When we frequently entertain our selves with Spiritual Subjects, and embrace all convenient Opportunities of Conversing with God by Prayer and by approaching his holy Table ; and had rather be Door-keepers in the House of God, than to dwell in the Tents of Wickedness. When we can look upon Death as a Passage to a blessed Immortality, and welcome its Approach, not only without Fear, but with Comfort and Satisfaction. Knowing that when this earthly Tabernacle shall be dissolved, we shall have a House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.

Rom. 6. 22.
Rom. 8. 18.
Psal. 84. 10.
2 Cor. 5. 1.

The PRAYERS.

I.

A Almighty God, who through thy only begotten Son Jesus Christ, hast overcome Death, and opened unto us the Gate of Everlasting Life; I humbly beseech thee, that as by thy special Grace preventing me, thou dost put into my Mind good Desires, so by thy continual Help I may bring the same to good Effect, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, World without end. *Amen.*

II.

A Almighty Father, who hast given thine only Son to die for our Sins, and to rise again for our Justification; grant me so to put away the Leaven of Malice and Wickedness, that I may always serve thee in Pureness of Living and Truth, through the Merits of the same thy Son Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

III.

IT is very meet, right, and my bounden Duty, that I should at all Times and in all Places, give Thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, Almighty Everlasting God: But chiefly am I bound to praise thee, for the glorious Resurrection of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the very Paschal Lamb which was offered for us, and hath taken away the Sin of the World, who by his Death hath destroyed Death, and by his rising to Life again, hath restored us

to Everlasting Life: Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the Company of Heaven, I laud and magnifie thy glorious Name, evermore praising thee and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, Heaven and Earth are full of thy Glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most High. *Amen.*

IV.

Blessed Jesus, who hast triumph'd over the Powers of Darknes, and conquer'd Hell and the Grave; who by thy glorious Resurrection hath made known the Power of thy Divinity, and proved thy self to be the true *Messias*; keep me stedfast in this Faith, and grant that all the Actions of my Life may testifie the Reality and Sincerity of my Belief; make me to rise from the Death of Sin to the Life of Righteousness; that as I am buried with thee by Baptism, I may mortifie all my corrupt Lusts and Affections; and no longer esteem the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World; and by being conformed to the Likeness of thy Resurrection, may put on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness; that I may place my Affections entirely on things above, and spend the remaining part of my Life to secure that Happiness thou hast purchased for me; that by thy Strength I may fight against all my ghostly Enemies, and by thy Power overcome them. Suffer not the Thoughts of Death to be any longer uneasie to me, since thou hast taken out the Sting, and divested it of any power to hurt: But teach me to look upon it as a Deliverance from Sin and Sorrow, and as a Passage to a happy

happy Eternity ; that when I shall depart this Life I may rest in thee, and at the general Resurrection at the last Day be found acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Saviour and my Redeemer. *Amen.*

C H A P. XVI.

St. Mark the Evangelist.

April 25.

Q. **W**hat Festival does the Church this Day celebrate ?

A. That of the Evangelist St. Mark.

Q. What mean you by an Evangelist ?

A. The Name was at first given to all those that preached the Gospel. But afterwards it came to be confined to those *Four* that writ the History of the Life and Preaching of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Whose *Four Gospels* make part of the sacred *Canon* of Scripture.

Q. What do you mean by the word Gospel ?

A. It is of *Saxon* Original, in which Language it signifies a *good Word*, and answers to *εὐαγγέλιον* in *Greek*, which imports *good News* or *good Tidings*. In the sacred use of the Word there seems to be a Figure very common and ordinary, whereby what signifies good News is set to denote the History of that *good News*; as the Birth, Life, Actions, Precepts, Promises, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Christ; which of all other Relations we Christians ought to look upon as *good Tidings of great Joy*.

Q. Of what Authority are the four Gospels that make part of the sacred Canon of Scripture?

A. The whole Church of Christ has received them from the beginning, as the genuine Writings of those Apostles and Evangelists whose Names they bear; and has testified, that they were delivered to them by the Apostles as the
Iren. Adv. Foundation and Pillar of their Faith. They were
Hær. lib. 3. owned as Writings divinely inspired; where-
c. 2. upon Copies of these Gospels were carried by
the Disciples of the Apostles, or Apostolick Men,
to all the Churches they converted or establish-
ed; they were read from the beginning in
all Christian Assemblies on the Lord's Day, and
Just. Mart. cited in the second Century for the Confirmation
Apol. 2. of the Faith, and the Conviction of Hereticks.
Which is a sufficient proof, that they are the
genuine Works of those Apostles and Evange-
lists whose Names they bear, and worthy to be
received as the Records of our Faith.

Q. What Account have we of St. Mark?

A. He was doubtless born of Jewish Parents,
Hiero. pref. originally descended of the Tribe of Levi. And
in Marc. this is very much confirmed by his Stile, where-
in he uses the Hebrew manner of expressing him-
self; neither does his Roman Name suggest any
Evidence to the contrary, because it was custo-
mary with the Jews when they travelled into
foreign Parts, especially into the European Pro-
vinces of the Roman Empire, to adapt to them-
selves an Appellation of that kind. He was
converted by some of the Apostles, probably by
St. Peter, to whom he was a constant Compa-
nion in all his Travels; supplying the place of
an Amanuensis, and Interpreter.

Q. What

Q. *What need was there of an Interpreter?*

A. Tho' the Apostles were divinely inspired, and had the Gift of Languages conferred upon them; yet was the *Interpretation of Tongues* a Gift more peculiar to some than others. For Christian Assemblies in those Days being frequently made up of Men of different Nations, who could not understand what the Apostles or others had spoken to the Congregation; some were enabled to interpret what others did not understand; and to speak it to them in their own native Language. And 'tis probable it might be St. Mark's Talent to expound St. Peter's Discourses after this manner. 1 Cor. 12. 10. 1 Cor. 14. 27.

Q. *Where was St. Mark sent to plant Christianity?*

A. He was by St. Peter sent into *Ægypt*, fixing his main Residence at *Alexandria*, and the places there about. Where so great was the Success of his Ministry, that according to *Eusebius*, he converted Multitudes both of Men and Women, not only to the embracing the Christian Religion, but to a more than ordinarily strict Profession of it. Euseb. lib. 2. c. 16.

Q. *Did this Evangelist confine his Preaching to Alexandria, and those Parts?*

A. He afterwards removed *Westward* to the Parts of *Lybia*, going through the Countries of *Marmarica*, *Pentapolis*, and others thereabouts. Where, notwithstanding the Barbarity and Idolatry of the Inhabitants, yet by his Preaching and Miracles, he planted the Gospel, and confirmed them in the Profession of it. And upon his return to *Alexandria*, he wisely ordered the Affairs of the Church, and provided for Succession by constituting Bishops, and other Officers and Pastors.

Q. *How*

Q. How did St. Mark suffer Martyrdom?

A. About *Easter*, at the Time the Solemnities of *Serapis* happen'd to be celebrated; the People being excited to a Vindication of the Honour of their Idol, broke in upon *St. Mark*, while he was employed in Divine Worship; and binding his Feet with Cords, dragg'd him thro' the Streets, and thrust him into Prison, where in the Night he had the Comfort of a Divine Vision. Next Day the enraged People renewed the Tragedy, and used him in the same manner, till his Flesh being raked off, and his Blood run out, his Spirits failed, and he expired. Some add, that they burnt his Body, and that the Christians decently intomb'd his Bones and Ashes, near the Place where he used to Preach. But all this Account is given by Authors whose Credit we cannot depend upon, and therefore must be received with Grains of Allowance.

Q. Were his Remains afterwards removed?

A. They were with great Pomp translated from *Alexandria* to *Venice*, as is asserted by some Writers; and tho' there is great Reason to doubt the Truth of this Relation, yet however he is adopted the tutelar Saint and Patron of that *Republick*, and has a very rich and stately Church erected to his Memory.

Q. What Writings did this Evangelist leave behind him?

A. Only his *Gospel*, which was written at the Intreaty of the Converts at *Rome*, who not content to have heard *St. Peter* preach, pressed *St. Mark* his Disciple, that he would commit to writing an Historical Account of what he had delivered to them; which he performed with no less Faithfulness than Brevity, and being perused by

by St. Peter, was ratified by his Authority, and commanded to be read publickly in their Religious Assemblies. It may very well be look'd upon as a Supplement to St. Matthew's Gospel; for by the Light this gives, that becomes more clear and perspicuous.

Q. Why is the Gospel frequently stiled St. Peter's?

A. Not so much because dictated by him to St. Mark, as because he principally compos'd it out of that Account which St. Peter usually deliver'd in his Discourses to the People, and because it received the Stamp of St. Peter's Approbation.

Q. What particular Proof is there of his Impartiality?

A. In that he is so far from concealing the shameful Fall and Denial of St. Peter, who was his dear Tutor and Master, that he relates it with some particular Circumstances and Aggravations, which the other Evangelists take no notice of.

Mark 14.
66, &c.

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. That a good Christian ought to instruct by his Example as well as by his Discourse, That when God tries his Servants with extraordinary Sufferings, he supplies them with a proportionable Assistance for their support. That the Light of the Gospel, tho' admirably fitted to conduct us into the Paths of Happiness, yet will certainly increase our Condemnation, if we do not govern our Lives by the Maxims of it. That we ought to be very thankful to God, for having instructed his Church with the heavenly Doctrine of this Evangelist, and to shew our grateful Sense of

of this valuable Treasure, by reading his Gospel frequently and attentively, and so firmly believing those things which he relates, that we may reap all those Advantages God designed us in that Revelation of his holy Will.

Q. Ought all Christians to read the Scriptures?

A. The very *End* and *Design* for which they were writ, does sufficiently prove this, because they contain the Terms and Conditions of our common Salvation; without the Knowledge and Practice of which, we can never attain Happiness. The *Articles* of our Faith proposed in Scripture, and the Precepts for the direction of our Lives, necessarily affect all the Members of the Christian Church, and therefore ought they carefully to be read and studied by all People. Besides, we find these Holy Writings addressed to Christians in general. Our *Saviour's Sermons* were preached to the Multitude as well as to his
 2 Cor. I. 1. Disciples. The *Apostles* direct their Epistles to
 Jam. I. 1. *all the Saints*, which implies all the Professors of Christianity; and to the *twelve Tribes scattered abroad*, which were the Jewish Christians dispersed over the World. The *Beræans* are
 Act. 17. 11. commended for *searching the Scriptures*; and
 2 Tim. 3. *Timothy* praised for *having known them from a*
 15. *Child*. And as they are the *Power of God unto*
 Rom. I. 16. *Salvation*, so they are a *sure Word of Prophecy*,
 2 Pet. I. 19. to which all People are bound to have a regard, that value the things which belong to their Eternal Peace.

Q. What was the Practice of the Jews, and the Primitive Church in this matter?

Act. 13. 27. *A.* It was the constant Custom of the *Jews*, not only to read and preach their *Law* every Sabbath-

Sabbath-Day in their *Synagogues*; but 'tis made the Character of a good Man among them, to meditate upon it Day and Night. The *Primi-Pfal. 1. 2.* *tive Fathers* press the reading of the Scriptures upon the People, as a matter of indispenfible Obligation; as the best Preservative against Heretical Opinions, as well as a bad Life; and in order to this purpose, the *ancient Church* took care to have the *Bible* translated into all Languages, which sufficiently shews they thought it ought to be read by the *Faithful* of all *Nations*. And there is a notorious Matter of Fact preserved as an Evidence that the Scriptures were then common to all People. Among other Methods to destroy Christianity, one was to force from Christians their *Bibles*, and to burn them; and there were many of both Sexes, and all Degrees, who chose rather to die, than deliver up those *sacred Records*; and they who through fear of Death complied, were stiled *Traditors*, as a Mark of Infamy; which could not have been if they had no *Bibles* to deliver up.

Q. *Are not the People apt to wrest Scriptures to their own Destruction; and has not the promiscuous use of them been the Occasion of Heresies?*

A. This only proves, that the best things may be abused; and tho' this very Inconvenience happen'd in the time of St. Peter, yet for the Cure of it he no where forbids the reading of them. And as to *Heresies*, they generally owe their rise to Men of Learning and Parts, who have not Humility and Modesty enough to submit to the universal Belief of Christians, and who are ambitious to distinguish themselves from the rest of Mankind.

Q. *But*

Q. But how does it appear that the Scriptures are the Word of God?

A. That the Scriptures were revealed by God, and that the things contained in them, were not invented by Men, is evident from what the Authors of the Books of Scripture assert themselves.

John 6. 40. They profess, that the Doctrine they taught was
 7. 16. *received from God himself*: The Word spoken
 Rom. 10. by them is stiled the *Word of God*: The Witness
 14. &c. they bear is called the *Testimony of God*; their
 1 Thess. 2. *Preaching the Gospel of God*. And that the
 13. Apostles might not err in delivering to others
 Col. 1. 25. what they received from our Saviour, he pro-
 1 Cor. 2. 1. mised them his *Holy Spirit to guide them into*
 Rom. 15. *all Truth*; and that the *Holy Ghost should bring*
 16. *all those things he had taught them to their re-*
 14. 26. *membrance*. And accordingly the *Holy Ghost*
 Acts 2. 4. did descend upon the Apostles in miraculous
 Gifts and Graces upon the Day of *Pentecost*.
 St. Peter affirms of them all in general, that
 1 Pet. 1. 12. *they preached the Gospel by the Holy Ghost sent*
down from Heaven. St. Paul is positive, that
 1 Cor. 2. 10. the great things belonging to the Gospel, God
revealed to them by the Spirit. And declares
 Ephes. 3. moreover, that *God had made known this Re-*
 3, 5. *velation, not only to him, but to the Apostles and*
Prophets, by the Spirit. Now that the Books of
 Scripture were written by those Persons whose
 Names they bear, and that they were received
 by the Church as Inspired Writings in the Age
 wherein they were writ, we have the general
 and uncontrouled Testimony of all Ages trans-
 mitted down to us, which is the utmost Proof
 a thing of that nature is capable of. And far-
 ther to evidence, that they who wrote those
 Books were faithful Historians and unquestion-
 able

able Witnesses, they reported the things they had seen and heard, and gave the utmost proof Men could do of their Integrity, in laying down their Lives in the confirmation of the Truth of what they related. And to shew that they were no Impostors, they wrought such Miracles as were Testimonies from Heaven, that they were divine Persons, and that what they said was to be credited. As to the *Old Testament*, the Authors of the *New* attest the Divinity of it, particularly St. Paul, who assures us, that *all Scripture is given by Inspiration*; the Books of the *Old Testament* being called so by way of Eminency. 2 Tim. 3. 16.

Q. Wherein consists the Perfection and Perspicuity of the Holy Scriptures?

A. In that whatever is necessary for us to know and believe, to hope for and practise in order to Salvation, is fully contained in those holy Volumes. And that those necessary things are there treated with so much Plainness and Clearness, as to be sufficiently understood by those who make a right use of their Reason, and bring a fit Temper and Disposition of Mind for the understanding of them.

Q. With what Preparation of Mind ought we to read the Scriptures, who acknowledge the Divine Authority of them?

A. With that Respect and Reverence which is due to the *Oracles* of God, with *Humility* and *Modesty*, from a Sense of our own Weakness and God's Perfection, and with earnest *Prayer* for the Divine Assistance. With Minds free from *Prepossession* and *Prejudice*, from *Vanity* and *Confidence* in our own Abilities, and with an *honest* and *pious* Disposition of Soul; for he that

John 7. 17. that doth God's Will, shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God.

Q. How may we make the reading of the Holy Scriptures most beneficial to us?

A. By diligently considering the *Design* of the *Author* of each Book of Scripture; and what is the *Subject* he chiefly handles, with the *Occasion* of his Writing; explaining *difficult Places* by those that are more *clear*; distinguishing between *literal* and *figurative* Expressions; and never having recourse to *Metaphors* and *Figures*, but when somewhat absurd Results from their being taken in a proper and literal Sense. Acquainting our selves with the common *Usages* and *Customs* of those Times in which they were writ; to which many Expressions allude: And again, by applying general *Rules* to particular *Cases*; it being impossible Scripture should comprehend all special Cases, which are infinite: And where there is any Difficulty, nothing adds greater Light, than the consulting those ancient and faithful Witnesses, who learnt the true Sense of Scripture from the Authors themselves. Without some such Method, no Author can be well understood; and to this purpose we have many helps in our own English Tongue.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

O Almighty God, who hast instructed thy holy Church with the heavenly Doctrine of thy Evangelist St. Mark; give us Grace, that being not like Children, who are carried away with every blast of vain Doctrine, we may be established

blished in the Truth of thy Holy Gospel, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

O Lord, I beseech thee mercifully to receive the Prayers of thy People which call upon thee; and grant that I may both perceive and know what things I ought to do; and also may have Grace and Power faithfully to fulfil the same, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

III.

A Lmighty and Everlasting God, who makest me both to will and to do those things that be good and acceptable unto thy Divine Majesty; let thy Fatherly Hand, I beseech thee, be over me; let thy Holy Spirit be ever with me, and so lead me into the Knowledge and Obedience of thy Word, that in the end I may obtain Everlasting Life, through the Merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour. *Amen.*

IV.

A Lmighty God, who hast not abandon'd us to the dim Light of our own Reason to conduct us to Happiness; but, when Mankind had miserably mistook the Object of their Worship, and the right Manner of Performing it, wert graciously pleased to reveal to us in the Holy Scriptures whatever is necessary for us to believe and practise in order to our Eternal Salvation. Grant that I may with Care and Diligence apply my self to the Reading of those sacred Volumes, and do thou open my Eyes that I may see the wondrous things of thy Law. Let me peruse them with that Reverence and
O Respect

Respect which is due to thy gracious Manifestations; with an entire Submission of my Understanding to thy divine Authority, and with a sincere and stedfast Resolution of Mind to govern my Life by the Maxims of thy Holy Gospel, and to obey and submit to thy blessed Will in every thing. Let thy precious Promises quicken my Obedience, and make me fruitful and abundant in the Work of the Lord. Let thy dreadful Threatnings fright me from my Sins, and make me speedily depart from all Iniquity: And thou, who workest in me to will and to do of thy good pleasure, teach me to obey all thy Commandments, to believe all thy Revelations, and make me Partaker of all thy gracious Promises, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

CHAP. XVII.

St. Philip and St. James the Less. May 1.

Q. *What Festival does the Church this Day celebrate?*

A. That of the two Apostles *St. Philip and St. James.*

Q. *Where was St. Philip born?*

A. At *Bethsaida in Galilee*, a Town near the Sea of *Tiberias*. The Natives of this Place passed under a very reproachful Character, as People more rude and unpolished than any other in the Territories of *Palestine*.

Q. *W*

Q. Why did our Saviour chuse his Disciples the great Instruments to convert the World, from this place?

A. To confound the Wisdom of the Wise, and by the Success of such contemptible Means to attest the Divinity of that Doctrine they preached.

Q. Of what Profession was St. Philip?

A. The Gospel takes no notice of his Parents and way of Life, tho' probably he was a *Fisherman*, the general Trade of that Place.

Q. What is thought by some to be his peculiar Privilege?

A. That he had the Honour of being *first* called to be a Disciple of our blessed Saviour; because tho' our Saviour after his Return from the Wilderness, first met with *St. Andrew* and his Brother *Peter*, and had some Conversation with them, yet they immediately returned to their Trade; and the next Day, as he was passing through *Galilee*, he found *Philip*, whom he commanded to follow him, the constant *John 1.43.* Form he used in chusing his Disciples. And it was a whole Year after, that the other two were called to be Disciples, when *John* was cast into Prison.

Q. Did St. Philip readily comply with our Lord's Command?

A. Yes, he immediately engaged in his Service, tho' he had not seen any Miracle. But 'tis reasonable to believe, that he was acquainted with *Moses* and the *Prophets*, and that he was awaken'd with the general Expectation then among the *Jews*, that the *Messias* would immediately appear; besides, we are to suppose the Divine Grace did particularly accompany the

O 2

Command

Command of *Christ*, and dispose those that he called to believe him to be the *Messias*?

Q. *What was the first Effect of his Faith in the Messias?*

A. A Forwardness of Mind to direct others in the same way of Happiness with himself; for John 1.45. he finds *Nathanael*, a Person of Note and Eminency, and acquaints him with the welcome News of his Discovery, that he had found him of whom *Moses* and the *Prophets* did write, the *Anointed* of God, the *Saviour* of the World, and conducts him to him.

Q. *What is recorded of this Apostle in the History of the Gospel?*

A. That to try his Faith, our *Saviour* propounded to him that Question, what they should do to procure so much Bread as would feed the vast Multitude that followed him. That 'twas John 6. 5. to him the *Gentile Profelytes* addressed themselves, when desirous to see our *Saviour*, of whom they had heard so great a Fame. And that 'twas with him our Lord had that Discourse concerning himself before the last Paschal Supper; wherein our *Saviour* gently rebukes him for the small Improvement he had made, after having attended so long upon his Instructions.

Q. *What part of the World is thought to have fallen to the Care of this Apostle?*

A. The *Upper Asia*, where he took great pains in planting the Gospel, and by his Preaching and Miracles made many Converts. In the latter end of his Life he came to *Hierapolis* in *Phrygia*, a City rich and populous, and very much addicted to Idolatry, and particularly to the Worship of a *Serpent* or *Dragon* of a prodigious Bigness. *St. Philip* by his Prayers procured the death, or at

at least the vanishing of this famous *Serpent*, and then by his Discourses made them sensible how unbecoming it was to give divine Honours to such odious Creatures.

Q. Where did he suffer Martyrdom?

A. At this City of *Hierapolis*; for the Magistrates being provoked by the Success *Christianity* found among the People, put *St. Philip* into Prison, and caused him to be severely whipp'd and scourg'd, and then led to Execution; where he was, as some say, hang'd up by the Neck against a Pillar; though others affirm, he was crucified?

Q. Is St. Philip reckon'd among the Married Apostles?

A. The Ancients generally affirm it, and say, *Euseb. lib.* that he had three Daughters; two whereof per- 3. c. 30. severed in their Virginity, and died at *Hierapolis*; the third, after having lived a very spiritual Life, died at *Ephesus*.

Q. What Writings did he leave behind him?

A. None; the *Gospel* that was forged under his Name, was produced by the *Gnosticks* to countenance their bad Principles and worse Practices.

Q. What Account have we of St. James?

A. There is no mention in the Sacred History of the Place of his Birth; but he is in Scripture stiled the *Brother of our Lord*: And by *Joseph*, eminently Skilful in Matters of Genealogy and Descent, expressly called the *Brother of Jesus Christ*. *Gal. 1. 19.*
Antiq. Jud.
l. 20, c. 8,

Q. In what Sense was St. James Brother of our Lord?

A. The Language of the *Jews* includeth in the Name of *Brethren* not only the strict Rela-

tion of Fraternity, but also the larger of Consanguinity; so that any degree of Relation justifies the expression. But the ancient Fathers, especially of the *Greek Church*, make *St. James* and them that were stiled *Brethren of our Lord*, Children of *Joseph* by a former Wife; and then, as he was reputed and called our *Saviour's* Father, so they might well be accounted and call'd his Brethren.

Q. *Why was this St. James stiled the Less?*

A. 'Tis thought he had this *Surname* from the Stature of his Body, to distinguish him from *St. James* that was of a greater heighth and bulk, and therefore called the *Major*; tho' others will have this Distinction founded in their different Ages. But he got himself a more honourable Name by the Piety and Verrue of his Life, which was *St. James the just*, by which he is still known all over the World.

Q. *What is recorded concerning our Saviour's particular Appearance to him after his Resurrection, mention'd by St. Paul?*

Hierom. de
Scrip. Eccl.

A. *St. Jerome* relates out of the *Hebrew Gospel* of the *Nazarenes*, that *St. James* had solemnly sworn, *That from the time he had drank of the Cup, at the Institution of the Sacrament, he would eat Bread no more till he saw the Lord risen from the dead.* That our Lord when he appeared to him said, *Bring hither Bread and a Table; and he took the Bread and blessed, and brake it, and gave it to James the just, and said unto him, my Brother, eat thy Bread, for the Son of Man is risen from among them that sleep.*

Q. *What became of St. James after our Saviour's Ascension?*

A. He

A. He was chosen Bishop of *Jerusalem*, some say by our *Saviour* before his departure from his Disciples, others hold he was elected by the *Apostles*, possibly by some particular intimation concerning it, which our Lord might leave behind him; whether way he was preferred, 'tis certain he was Bishop of *Jerusalem*, the Mother of all other Churches; and preferred upon the Account of his Relation to our *Saviour*, as for the same reason was *Symeon* chose his immediate Successor.

Q. *What Particulars are related in Scripture concerning him?*

A. That *St. Paul* after his Conversion made his Address to this *Apostle*, by whom he was honoured with the Right-hand of Fellowship. Gal. 1. 19. That to him *St. Peter* sent the News of his miraculous Deliverance out of Prison; *Go shew* 2. 9. *these things unto James and to the Brethren*; that is, to the whole Church, especially *St. James* the Bishop and Pastor of it. Act. 12. 17.

Q. *Wherein did he appear principally active?*

A. In the Synod of *Jerusalem*, in the great Controversie concerning the Obligation of the *Jewish Rites and Ceremonies*; for tho' the Case Act. 15. 13. was open'd by *St. Peter*, and debated by *St. Paul*, yet the final and decretory Sentence was pronounced by *St. James*.

Q. *What is related concerning his extraordinary Piety and Devotion?*

A. That he was of a *meek and humble* Temper; the Dignity of his Station, and his Relation to our *Saviour*, did not exalt him in his own Thoughts, for in the Inscription of his Epistle he Jam. 1. 1. only styles himself *Servant of the Lord Jesus*: His *Temperance* was admirable, he wholly ab-

Epiph. stained from Flesh, he drank neither Wine nor strong Drink, nor ever used the Bath; he was so very abstemious, that his Body was covered with paleness thro' fasting. *Prayer* was his constant Business and Delight, and by his daily Devotions his *Knees* were become as *hard* and *brutish* as *Camels*. And by his Prayers in a great Drought he obtained Rain. He govern'd the Church with *Wisdom* and *Industry*, and shewed great *Charity* to his Enemies, by praying for them at the Hour of his Death. He was not only revered by the *Christians*, but honoured even by the *Jews* for his excellent Vertues.

Q. How did the Enemies of St. James conspire his Ruine?

Joseph.
Antiq. Jud.
l. 20. c. 8.

A. St. Paul having escaped the Malice of the *Jews* by appealing to *Cæsar*, they resolve to revenge it upon St. James, but not being able to accomplish it under *Festus's* Government, they more effectually attempted it under the Procuratorship of *Albinus* his Successor. When *Ananus* the younger, then High-Priest, and of the Sect of the *Sadducees*, merciless and implacable in his Temper, resolved to dispatch him before the new Governour could arrive; to this end the Council is hastily summoned, and the *Apostle*, with some others, were accused for Transgressing the Law, and for Blasphemy against God.

Q. How did the Scribes and Pharisees set about to ensnare him?

Euseb. lib.
2. c. 23.

A. By flattering Speeches they endeavoured to engage him, at the Confluence of the *Paschal* Solemnity, to undeceive the People concerning *Jesus*, whom they look'd upon as the *Messiah*; and that he might be the better heard, to go with

with 'em to the top of the *Temple*; thinking by this Method to bring him to renounce Christ. They address'd to him as he was placed upon the Pinacle of the Temple, in these words, *Tell us, O just Man, what we are to believe concerning Jesus Christ, who was crucified.* He answered with a loud Voice, *Why do you enquire of Jesus the Son of Man? He sits in Heaven on the right Hand of the Majesty on High, and will come again in the Clouds of Heaven.* Upon which the People glorified the *blessed Jesus*, and proclaimed *Hosannah to the Son of David.*

Q. *How did St. James suffer Martyrdom?*

A. Upon this Disappointment of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, they suddenly cried out that *Judas* himself was seduced, and they threw him down from the place where he stood; and being very much bruised, tho' not killed, he recovered so much strength as to get upon his Knees and pray for them that thus cruelly used him; and while he was thus praying for them, they loaded him with a shower of Stones, till one with a *Fuller's Club* beat out his Brains. He died according to *Epiphanius*, in the *Ninety sixth Year* Hæc. 78. of his Age, about *Twenty four Years* after Christ's *Ascension*.

Q. *What does Josephus mention concerning the Death of St. James?*

A. He reckons it as what more immediately alarm'd the Divine Vengeance, and hasten'd the universal Ruine and Destruction of the *Jewish Nation*.

Q. *What Writings remain of St. James's?*

A. One *Epistle* address'd to the *Jewish Converts* dispersed and scattered abroad; to fortifie them against all those Temptations, whereby the Purity

Purity of their *Faith* might be endangered, and to secure their *Patience* and their *Charity*, and all other Christian Practices; hereby encouraging them to faithful Perseverance. The *Gospel* that goes under his Name is rejected by Learned Men as spurious and *apocryphal*.

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. Readily to obey all the Suggestions and Offers of Divine Grace, and to prepare our Minds for the reception of supernatural Truth. Zealously to propagate that Christian Knowledge to others, which the good Providence of God has graciously bestowed upon us; which obliges Pastors in respect of their Flock, Parents of their Children, Masters of their Servants, and all Christians in some degree in regard of one another. Boldly to profess the Truth when the Providence of God calls us to give Testimony to it. And under all our Sufferings to preserve a Christian Frame of Mind, and to express our Charity for those who are the Instruments of our Sufferings. Frequently to curb our Appetites in the use of lawful Pleasures, that we may be prepared to imitate these blessed Apostles in the greatest Acts of *Self-denial*.

Q. Wherein consists the Duty of Self-denial?

A. In a strict sense, our *sinful* and *disobedient Appetites* are the only Objects of Religious *Self-denial*; and as it is commanded by our Saviour, it seems to denote nothing else, but that we should be willing to quit all Earthly Comforts, even Life it self; and to undergo the greatest Hardships, tho' they end in Death, rather than out of a fondness to this World, and the Enjoyments of it, to do any thing contrary to the Religion

gion of Jesus Christ. With *Moses*, chusing rather to *suffer Affliction with the People of God*, Heb. 11. 25. than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a season. In a larger sense, it comprehends the denying our innocent Appetites, as a necessary Means and Instrument, without which we shall never be able to practise the greatest Acts of Self-denial.

Q. In what Terms is the Duty of Self-denial represented in Scripture?

A. By forsaking Father and Mother, by hating Wife and Children, by denying Brother and Sister, by quitting all that we have, by laying down our Lives, and bearing the Cross. *He that loveth Father and Mother more than me*, saith our Saviour, *is not worthy of me*. If any Man come after me, and hateth not Wife and Children, Brethren and Sisters, he cannot be my Disciple, If he forsaketh not all that he hath, and hateth not his own Life, and doth not bear his Cross, he cannot be my Disciple. These are the Maxims of Eternal Wisdom, from which whenever we deviate, we do most foolishly ruine and destroy our selves.

Q. What is implied in the fore-mention'd Expressions?

A. That no Consideration of Pleasure, or Fear of Pain, should allure or affright us from holding fast the Faith once delivered to the Saints. That the Commands of our Parents, to whom we owe the greatest Natural Affection and Reverence, ought not to be complied with, when they contradict the Commands of our Saviour; because all Authority, Natural, Civil, and Ecclesiastical, must be exercised with respect to God, who is the Fountain of all Power. That the most allowable Affection to the Friend of our Bosom,

Bosom, and natural Tenderneſs to our own Offspring, will not juſtifie the Tranſgreſſion of our Duty; becauſe if we truly love God, we ſhould ſuffer no Creature to be his Rival. That our whole Subſiſtance in this World muſt be abandon'd, when we cannot keep it without making ſhipwrack of Conſcience; becauſe other ways we ſhall certainly loſe the Inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that faſteth not. That Life it ſelf, which Nature hath taught us to guard with ſo much Care, muſt be readily parted with, rather than deny the Truth; becauſe this is in ſuch a Caſe the only method to ſecure the Bleſſings of Life Eternal: And that tho' the Pain and Ignominy our Perſecutors inflict, ſhould equal that of the Croſs, yet it muſt be patiently endured, rather than diſown our bleſſed Maſter, who ſuffered that infamous Punishment upon our Account, and will deny us before his Father, if we deny him before Men.

Q. Is this Duty of Self-denial of indiſpenſable Obligation?

A. Religion being a Duty we owe to God can never be ſuperſeded by any Commands, even of our lawful Superiours; becauſe we are obliged *Acts 5. 29.* *to obey God rather than Man;* and when we are brought before Kings and Governours for Chriſt's ſake, we are to bear our Teſtimony againſt them, becauſe all their Authority is derived from God, ſo that they can have no Power to controul thoſe Commands he lays upon us; and if thro' Fear, or any other worldly Paſſion, we are prevailed upon to comply againſt the Truth, we may juſtly expect the dreadful Fate of being denied by our Saviour at the Great Day, before his Father which is in Heaven.

Q. How

Q. How is the denial of our innocent Appetites instrumental in mortifying our sinful Desires and disobedient Actions?

A. Because if we gratifie them in all things, where we lawfully may, they will by long use and indulgence acquire a great Power and Empire over us, and it will be a difficult Task to deny them any thing: For our Appetites make no difference between an *innocent* and *sinful* Enjoyment, they are only moved by Pleasure; so that if we will be sure to conquer and subdue them in all Instances that are *sinful*, we must take care they grow not strong upon us in any Instances whatsoever.

Q. Wherein appears the Reasonableness of this Duty of Self denial in the strictest sense?

A. Because that as God has promised to assist and support us by his Holy Spirit in the Discharge of this difficult Duty; so he has been graciously pleased to assure us, that he will reward the Practice of it with greater Degrees of Eternal Happiness; and nothing can be more reasonable, than to part with things of small value, for things infinitely greater and more considerable. And we are sure that the *Sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed.* Rom 8.18. We are his Creatures, and the Purchase of our Saviour's Blood, therefore no Consideration whatsoever should stand in competition with the serving him. Besides, the blessed *Jesus*, who requires it from us, has given us the greatest Example of *Self-denial* that ever was, and that in Pity and Kindness to us, and wholly for our Benefit and Advantage.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

O Almighty God, whom truly to know is Everlasting Life; Grant me perfectly to know thy Son Jesus Christ to be the Way, the Truth and the Life, that following the steps of thy holy Apostles, *St. Philip* and *St. James*, I may stedfastly walk in the Way that leadeth to Eternal Life, through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

Gracious God, teach me readily to obey thy heavenly Call; carefully to attend to all the Suggestions of thy blessed Spirit; entirely to give my Assent to all those Truths which have been attested by Miracles, and carry in their Nature an Evidence that they come from above. And when thou hast thus illuminated my Understanding with a Ray of heavenly Light; rectifie my crooked and perverse Will, by the Practice of thy holy Precepts, and inflame all my Affections to an eager Observation of them. Make me zealous to propagate this sure way to true Happiness to all those that sit in the Darkness of Error, or in the Slavery of Sin. Raise up a primitive Spirit of Zeal and Fervour to convert Souls, among those who wait at thy Altar; engage the Minds of the Great and Powerful to countenance all such pious Undertakings, and let every Christian in his Place and Station contribute to so good a Work; that the whole World may be inlightened with the

the Knowledge and Love of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

III.

Blessed God, who hast set before us the Examples of thy Saints, that our Duty may become familiar to us, since performed by Men of like Passions with our selves; arm me with Resolution to confess thee before Men as they did; that neither Profit may engage, nor Pleasure soften me into any sinful Compliance; nor any Sufferings or Persecutions so far influence my Fear, as to make me stagger or move from my steadfastness. That in all my Sufferings here upon Earth, for the Testimony of thy Truth, I may fix my Mind upon those things thou hast prepared for them that love thee, and by the Example of thy *Saints*, pray to thee for those that cruelly and despitefully use me, O blessed Jesus, who standest at the Right-hand of God, to succour those who suffer for thee, the only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

C H A P. XVIII.

The Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ. A Moveable Feast.

Q. *What Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?*

A. Our blessed Saviour's *ascending* into Heaven in his Humane Nature, and his sitting at the *Right Hand of God.*

Q. *When*

Q. When did our Saviour ascend into Heaven?

Acts i. 3. *A. Forty Days after his Resurrection; during which time he confirmed the Truth of his Resurrection, by appearing several times to his Disciples, discoursing with them, and speaking of the things concerning the Kingdom of God.*

Q. How was the Ascension performed?

V. 9, 10. A. While he was blessing his Disciples, he was taken up in a bright Cloud, they all steadfastly looking after him, till he was entirely gone out of their sight.

Q. What Testimony did the Angels bear at his Ascension?

A. While the Apostles were looking after our Saviour, two of them appeared to them, assuring
V. 11. them, that as Jesus was taken from them into Heaven, so he should in as glorious a manner return again to judge the World.

Q. Was it necessary the Apostles should be Eye-witnesses of the Ascension?

A. Yes, in order to the Confirmation of the Certainty and Reality of it. For tho' this was not necessary in his Resurrection; because whatever was a Proof of his Life after Death, was a Demonstration of his Resurrection; yet the Apostles not being to see him then in Heaven, 'twas necessary they should be Eye-witnesses of his Act of Ascending, that so they might be able to bear their Testimony to it.

Q. What farther Proof had the Apostles of our Saviour's Ascension?

John 14.
 28, 29. *A. Before they saw our Saviour ascend, he had told them whither he was going, and what Power and Dignity would be conferred upon him, and as an Evidence of this his Exaltation*

to the Right-hand of God, had promised to send down the *Holy Ghost* upon them in a sensible manner; so that they afterwards receiving the wonderful Effects of his being there, had abundant Evidence of his *Exaltation* in Heaven.

Q. *How was Christ's Ascension typically represented under the Law?*

A. By the *High Priest's* being appointed once every Year to enter into the Holy of Holies; which shewed that the *High Priest of the good things to come*, by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle not made with Hands, was to enter into the Holy Place, having obtained Eternal Redemption for us; all the Jews believing that the Tabernacle did signify this World, and the Holy of Holies, the highest Heavens. Wherefore as the *High Priest* did pass thro' the rest of the Tabernacle, and with the Blood of the Sacrifice enter into the Holy of Holies; so was the *Messias* to offer up himself a Sacrifice, to pass thro' all the Courts of this World, and with his Blood to enter into the highest Heavens, the most glorious Seat of the Majesty of God.

Q. *How was Christ's Ascension prophetically declared?*

A. By the Royal Prophet *David*, thou hast ascended up on high, thou hast led Captivity captive, thou hast received Gifts for Men. Which words, tho' spoken immediately of *David* himself ascending in triumph up the Hill whereon the Temple stood, the Mount *Sion*, after his Conquest over the *Philistines*; yet they had also a Prophetical Relation to our blessed Saviour's *Ascension* into Heaven; the phrase *on high* in the Language of *David* signifying Heaven, is most properly applied to our Conqueror the

P

Messias.

Messias. And thus they are understood by
 Eph. 4.8. *St. Paul to the Ephesians.*

Q. Whither did our Saviour ascend ?

A. Into the Heaven of Heavens, the Presence of God ; where his humane Nature is seated far above all Angels and Arch-angels, all Principalities and Powers, even at the *Right hand* of God.

Q. What mean you by his sitting at the Right hand of God ?

A. The Advancement of his Humane Nature, to the height of Dignity and Authority in the Presence of God ; the Right hand being esteemed the Place of greatest Honour and Favour. Or it may import his sitting in his Humane Shape on the Right hand of that bright Throne, or resplendent Glory, which visibly accompanies and manifests some extraordinary Presence of God, the usual Symbol of his Power and Majesty. Which was probably what *St. Stephen* seems to
 Acts 7. 55. have seen, when he beheld the *Glory of God, and Jesus standing at the Right hand of God.*

Q. What are we obliged to believe concerning our Saviour's Ascension ?

A. That the only begotten and eternal Son of God, after he rose from the dead, did with the same Soul and Body with which he rose by a true and local Translation, convey himself from the Earth on which he lived, through all the Regions of the Air, through all the Celestial Orbs, until he came unto the Heaven of Heavens, the most glorious Presence of the Majesty of God.

Q. What Benefit do we particularly receive from Christ's Exaltation in Heaven ?

A. The great Advantage of his *Intercession*

for us at the Right hand of God, where he is a perpetual Patron and Advocate in our behalf, to plead our Cause, to solícite our Concernments, to represent our Wants, and to offer up our Prayers and Requests to God, by Vertue of his meritorious Sacrifice. So that the true Penitent may expect Forgiveness; the weak but sincere Christian, Strength and Assistance, having so powerful a *Mediator* with the Father. Those that suffer and are persecuted, may depend upon their *High Priest* for Comfort and Support, since he *is touched with a sense of our infirmities*. And all may come boldly to the Throne of *Grace*, to obtain mercy and help in time of need, because our Prayers are offered to God by so powerful and prevalent a Hand. Heb. 4. 15, 16.

Q. What Reason may there be given why our Saviour did not ascend in the sight of the Jews for their Conviction?

A. It was only absolutely necessary that they who were to preach the Gospel should have the utmost Evidence of those Matters of Fact they attested. God's Design was to bring the World to Salvation by the Exercise of Faith, which is an Act of Assent upon the Testimony of another, with which Sight is inconsistent. And 'tis to Mat. 9. 34. be doubted whether they who ascribed our Saviour's Miracles to the Power of the Devil, and suborned the Soldiers to say upon his *Resurrection*, that his Disciples stole him away, would not have called his *Ascension*, if they had seen it, a Phantasm and vain Apparition. 28. 12, 13.

Q. What influence ought the Ascension of our Saviour to have upon us?

A. It ought to confirm our Faith, to strengthen our Hope, and to raise our Affections to things above.

Q. How does the Ascension confirm our Faith?

A. Because it gives us a farther Proof of our Saviour's *Divine Mission*, and that he was a true Prophet sent from God; it being Evidence beyond exception, that God would never have so highly rewarded him, and visibly have taken him into Heaven, if he had not been sent into the World by him, and had not approved of the Message he delivered to us. Neither can we doubt of his return to judge the World, our Saviour having declared himself *appointed by*
Acts 10. 12. *God Judge of quick and dead*, and the Angels having confirmed the same; nothing being more credible than the saying of one whom God has so visibly took to himself.

Q. How does the Ascension strengthen our Hope?

A. By seeing our own Nature thus advanced, we are assured that Dust and Ashes may thither ascend; and the blessed Jesus being our Head, as Members of his Body we may expect admission into that heavenly Court, where he sits in Glory, since we have his Word that can never fail, that he is *gone to prepare a place for us*. Besides, our Saviour's *Exaltation* dispels all those Fears the weakness of our Nature may suggest to us, because he has an absolute Disposal of all those Graces which are necessary to attain eternal Happiness.

Q. How does the Ascension exalt our Affections?

A. By putting us in mind that our Treasure is *above*, and that therefore we ought not to set our Affections upon things that are *below*. That Heaven is the true and only Happiness of a Christian, and that our great Design in this World

World ought to be, to fit and prepare our selves for the enjoyment of it. That our constant Endeavours ought to tend towards the qualifying our selves to be received into our Saviour's Presence, to whom we have the greatest Obligations of Duty and Gratitude. That by trampling upon our Sins and subduing the Lusts of the Flesh, we may make our Conversation correspond to our Saviour's Condition, that where the Eyes of the Apostles were forced to leave him, thither our Thoughts may follow him.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

GRant, I beseech thee, Almighty God, that like as I do believe thy only begotten Son the Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the Heavens; so I may also in Heart and Mind thither ascend, and with him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, World without end. *Amen.*

II.

O God, the King of Glory, who hast exalted thy only Son Jesus Christ with great Triumph unto thy Kingdom in Heaven, we beseech thee leave us not comfortless, but send to us thy Holy Ghost to comfort us and exalt us unto the same Place whither our Saviour is gone before, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, World without end. *Amen.*

III.

IT is very meet, right and my bounden Duty, that I should at all times, and in all places give Thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God, thro' thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who after his most glorious Resurrection, manifestly appeared to his Apostles, and in their sight ascended up into Heaven to prepare a place for us; that where he is, thither we might also ascend and reign with him in Glory. Therefore with Angels and Arch-angels and all the Company of Heaven, I laud and magnifie thy glorious Name, evermore praising thee and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Hosts, Heaven and Earth are full of thy Glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord, most high. *Amen.*

IV.

Bp. Ker.

I Believe, O victorious Love, that thou after thy Conquest over Death and Hell, didst ascend in triumph to Heaven, that thou mightest *prepare Mansions* for us; and from thence as Conqueror, bestow the Gifts of thy Conquest on us; and above all, the Gift of thy holy Spirit; that thou mightest enter into the Holy of Holies, as our great High Priest, to present to thy Father the sweet smelling Sacrifice of his crucified Son, the sole Propitiation for Sinners, and therefore all Love, all Glory be to thee. Glory be to thee, O Jesus, who didst leave the World and ascend to Heaven about the thirty third Year of thy Age, to teach us in the prime of our Years, to despise this World when we are best able to enjoy it, and to reserve our full Vigour for Heaven and for thy Love. O thou

O thou whom my Soul loveth, since thou hast left the World, what was there ever in it worthy of our Love! O let all my Affections ascend after thee, and never return to the Earth more; for, *whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth, that I desire in comparison of thee.* Amen, Lord Jesus, Amen.

C H A P. XIX.

Whitsunday. A Moveable Feast.

Q. **W**hat Festival does the Church this Day celebrate?

A. The Descent of the *Holy Ghost* upon the Apostles in the visible Appearance of *fiery cloven Tongues*, and in those miraculous Powers which were then conferred upon them. Acts 2. 3.

Q. Why do we call this Festival Whitsunday?

A. Partly from the glorious light of Heaven which was this Day sent down upon the Earth from the Father of Lights; but principally because this day being one of the stated times for *Baptism* in the ancient Church, those who were Baptized, put on *white Garments*, as Types of that spiritual Purity they received in *Baptism*; and which they were obliged to preserve in the future course of their Lives.

Q Which were the stated Times for Baptism in the Primitive Church?

A. At first all Persons were baptized as Opportunity and Occasion served; and when there

Tert. de
Baptif.
c. 19.

Orat. 40.

were appointed Seasons Infants and the Sick received Baptism at all times. But when the *Discipline* of the Church began to be settled, it was confined to two solemn and stated Times of the Year, *Easter* and *Whitsontide*, including the intermediate space of Fifty Days that is between them; which was in a manner accounted *Festival*, and Baptism administered during the whole time. Besides these, *Nazianzen* reckons the Feast of *Epiphany*, probably in memory of the *Birth* and *Baptism* of our Saviour, both which went anciently under that Title; but tho' this might be a Custom in some Places, yet 'tis questioned whether 'twas universal; besides, afterwards it was prohibited and laid aside.

Q. *Why was Easter and Whitsontide appointed for this purpose?*

A. *Easter* was appointed in Memory of Christ's Death and Resurrection, correspondent to which are the two parts of the Christian Life represented in *Baptism*, dying unto Sin and rising again to Newness of Life. *Whitsontide* in Memory of the Apostles being then baptized with the Holy Ghost and with Fire, and of their having at that time baptized themselves three thousand Souls; this Communication of the Holy Ghost to the Apostles being in some measure represented and conveyed in *Baptism*.

Mat. 3. 11.
Acts 2. 41.

Q. *Why was Baptism deferred to these stated Times?*

A. That Adult Converts, who made up the Body of baptized Persons in those Days, might be fitted and prepared for their Solemn Admission into the Church by this Sacrament. In order to this purpose they were for some considerable time catechised and instructed in the Principles

ples of the Christian Faith, from whence the *Candidates* of *Baptism* were called *Catechumens*; they were obliged to give Testimony of their Proficiency in Christian Knowledge, to the *Bishop* or *Presbyter* who were appointed to examine them upon such Points; they were farther to give Proof of a sober and regular Conversation, and that they might be the better disposed to receive the great Benefits of this Sacrament, they prepared themselves by *Prayer* and *Fasting* in a strict Observation of the holy Season of *Lent*. As for the Children of Christian Parents, 'tis evident they were admitted to Baptism in their Infancy, from the greatest part of the Ancient Writers, as *Irenaeus*, *Tertullian*, *Origen* and *Cyprian*.

Q. When were the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost conferred upon the Apostles?

A. Upon the Day of Pentecost, which was observed by the Jews fifty Days after their Passover, in memory of the Law delivered at Mount Sinai, and for the gathering and bringing in of their Harvest.

Q. What was the first effect of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles?

A. They began to speak with other Tongues as the Spirit gave them Utterance. Whereby, they who were Jews, were enabled in an instant to publish that Religion God had revealed to them, all over the World.

Q. Did the Inhabitants of Jerusalem take any notice of this matter?

A. Yes; at the noise of it, those Jews that were assembled at Jerusalem, from all parts to observe the Day of Pentecost; came together unto the Place, and were confounded, because every

Cyrl. Præf.
Catech.
Iren. l. 2.
c. 39.
Tertul. de
Bap.
Orig. in
Lev. c. 12.
§. 1. in
Rom. lib. 5.
§. 3.
Cypr. Epist.
ad Fidem.

every Man heard the *Apostles* speak in their own Language, wherein they were born.

Q. Wherein did this Gift of Tongues consist?

A. Not in a capacity of speaking several Languages at the same instant, for that is impossible, but in speaking several Languages, without ever having had the Advantage of Learning them. So
v. 8. that the several Nations then present heard some or other of the *Apostles* speaking in their own Language.

Q. How was this Gift conferred upon the Apostles?

Acts 2. 2, 3. *A.* Suddenly there came a Sound from Heaven, as of a mighty rushing Wind, and it filled all the House where they were sitting; and there appeared unto them cloven Tongues, like as of Fire, and it sat upon each of them.

Q. What does this Sound from Heaven as of a mighty rushing Wind represent to us?

A. 'Tis a fit Emblem of the *Divine Spirit*, by whose Efficacy the Gospel should have a speedy and unexpected success. To this our Saviour had
John 3. 8. compared it in his Discourse with *Nicodemus*. And it signifies to us, that the Publication of the Gospel was attended with the same Divine Presence and Power that the giving of the Law was; but not with the same Circumstances of Terror.

Q. What do the Cloven Tongues as it were of Fire represent to us?

A. Not only the diversity of Languages miraculously infused into the *Apostles*, to enable them to preach to divers Nations; but the quick and piercing Efficacy of their Speech.

Q. What

Q. What mean these Cloven fiery Tongues sitting upon each of them?

A. It signifies this *Gift of Tongues* was constant, because they had continual use of it; and that it was common to all the *Apostles*, because they were all to be Publishers of the Gospel, and the Witnesses of our Lord's Resurrection; which was the great Miracle whereby the Gospel was to be confirmed.

Q. What Evidence is there that this Miracle was real, and that there was no manner of deceit in it?

A. It was publicly wrought before many Witnesses, and those Enemies to the *Apostles*, as being the Disciples of him they had so lately crucified; they gave Proof of this Miraculous Power in the Presence of great Multitudes of several Nations, and in all places where they went preaching the Gospel?

Q. Might not the Apostles craftily combine together to impose upon the World by the Pretence of such a Miracle, after having acquired the Knowledge of Languages by Study and Industry?

A. No; because they were not Strangers at *Jerusalem*; their Persons were known as the Followers of *Jesus*; and so was their mean Condition and illiterate Education; which gave them no Opportunity to attain this Skill in an ordinary way. And where they were not known, their affirming that this Gift was supernaturally conferred upon them, was supported by the Power they had to work other Miracles of all kinds; which they every where did frequently; and particularly in this kind, having a Power to impart the same Gift to others by the Imposition Acts 19. 6. of Hands.

Q. But

Q. But might not this Gift of Tongues be only the Effect of an Enthusiastick Heat, and of a Brain distempered with Wine?

A. Language being not natural to Man, but an arbitrary thing, no violent Heat whatsoever could form a new Language to a Man which he never knew before. But were it possible, the time and the manner how the *Apostles* used this Gift, prove that it was no Effect of Wine, for it was the third Hour of the Day, the time of Morning Prayers, to which the *Jews* generally came fasting; and they argued with such Strength and Sedateness, that they convinced great Numbers of their Hearers of the Excellency of the Doctrine delivered by them; which shews their Reason was not discomposed; and the same Spirit and Power continued with them afterwards, which proves it was not the Effect of a sudden Heat.

Q. To what end were the Apostles thus endowed with all Languages?

A. To enable them to spread and diffuse the Knowledge of Christianity over the World, the Gospel thereby making a greater Progress in a few Years, than it could have done in humane Probability without it, in many Ages.

Q. Does it seem probable that if the Conversion of Infidels were attempted by Men of honest and sincere Minds, God would extraordinarily countenance such a Design?

A. 'Tis agreeable to Reason to think he would, and no wise contrary to Scripture; for as the Wisdom of God is never found to be prodigal in multiplying the Effects of his Almighty Power, so it is never wanting to afford all necessary Evidences and Motives of Conviction.

Q. What

Q. What other extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost were conferred upon the Apostles?

A. They had the Gift of *Inspiration*, whereby they were fully and clearly instructed in all manner of heavenly Truth, bringing to their Minds whatever Christ had taught them; and supplying whatever he had designedly omitted; till they were better able to bear it; and were thereby infallibly assisted in delivering the said Truth entire to others. And they had the *Gift of Miracles*, which enabled them to prove to others with the most convincing Evidence, those things God had revealed to them.

Q. What do you mean by a Miracle?

A. The Work of a *Superior Power*, unaccountable to us from *Natural Causes*, evident and wonderful to *Sense*. An Effect may then be said to be *supernatural*, when either in it self, or in its Manner and Circumstances, it exceeds any *Natural Power* that we know of to produce it; which does not necessarily imply, that *Miracles* are always an immediate Effect of the *Divine Power*, because *Angels* good or bad may do such things as exceed any natural Power known to us, and which we cannot distinguish from some Effects that are wrought by the immediate Power of God. And if a Miracle was not externally sensible, how shall the Spectators perceive it? They must find some change in the Object, or else the pretended Miracle is lost to them.

Q. When are Miracles a convincing Proof of the Truth and Divinity of any Doctrine?

A. When they are wrought in Confirmation of such Doctrines as are worthy of God, and which tend to promote Piety, as the Christian Doctrines most eminently do; for if they are wrought

Deut. 13.
1, 2, 3.
Mat. 12.
25, 26.

wrought to introduce Idolatry, or to countenance Impiety and Immorality, we have the Warrant of *Moses* not to regard them. And our Saviour refers the *Jews* to the Nature of his Doctrine, as a Proof that his Power of working Miracles was not from *Satan*. And Miracles are then more especially a convincing Proof, when they are of such a Nature and Kind, that they are peculiar to the Power of God, and cannot be performed by any *unclean Spirit*; as the *foretelling future Contingencies*, *knowing Mens Hearts*, *raising the Dead*, and *casting out Devils*.

Q. Is it not a great Sin to disbelieve the Gospel after so thorough a Confirmation of it?

A. The Gospel being sufficiently propounded, and there being such sufficient Grounds offered to persuade Men to believe it, as the *confirmation* of it by *Miracles*, of which we are assured by credible Relation; it must be a Sin of the greatest size to resist so great a Light, and to reject the greatest Blessings that ever were bestowed on Mankind. How shall Men escape if they neglect so great Salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the *Lord*, and was confirmed by them that heard him? Besides, our Saviour has plainly declared, *That he that believeth not shall be damned*; and that the not *receiving his Words*, designed for such an inestimable Good, and attested with such Authority and Commission from God the *Father*, is an Accusation which will be heavily charged on Men at the Day of Judgment.

Mark 16.
16.

Joh. 12.48.

Q. What are the ordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, which regard all Christians in all Ages to the end of the World?

A. All those Helps and Assistances which are necessary for the Performance of those Conditions upon

upon which our Salvation depends; partly by illuminating our Understandings in our sincere and diligent Enquiries after Divine Truth; and partly by exciting our Wills to that which is good, and strengthening our vigorous Endeavours in the Prosecution of it. So that the Gift of God's Spirit in this sense does imply his continual residence in good Men, his being a principle of spiritual Life to them, and his powerful Assistance of them to all the purposes of Holiness and Obedience.

Q. *How may we attain these ordinary Gifts of the Holy Spirit?*

A. By the use of all those Means which God has established for this End and Purpose, which are therefore called the *Means of Grace*. As Jam. 1. 5. humble, hearty and fervent *Prayer*, a frequent Luk. 11. 13. and devout use of the *Holy Sacrament*, reading and hearing God's *Holy Word*; with the use of all other likely means to attain those Graces; which we seek for at his Hands, and all this as obedient Members of the Catholick Church, to whom alone Christ has promised these Influences of his Spirit.

Q. *What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?*

A. To thank God for those miraculous Gifts he bestowed upon the Apostles to fit them to convert the World, and for inspiring the sacred Penmen of Holy Writ; whereby he has given such abundant Testimony of the Truth of our Religion, and such firm Grounds for our Faith. To live according to the holy Precepts of that Gospel, which has received so convincing a Testimony. Earnestly to beg of God the Gift of his Holy Spirit, which is so necessary to enable
us

us to run the ways of his Commandments, and which God is ready to grant to our hearty and fervent Prayers. To support our selves under all the Difficulties of our Christian Warfare, that arise either from our own Weakness, or the Power of our spiritual Enemies; by considering, *that he that is in us, is greater than he that is in the World;* and that we may *do all things thro' Christ that strengthneth us.* To attribute all the good that is in us, as well as the Perfections and Abilities we enjoy, to the Holy Spirit, whose free Gift they are; and to employ them to the Benefit and Advantage of our Neighbours, they being therefore given that we might *profit with them.*

1 Joh. 4. 4.
Phil. 4. 13.

Q. What do you mean by the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit?

A. The third Person in the most Adorable Trinity, distinct from the Father and the Son and eternally proceeding from both; being called the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of the Son, as well as of the Father, and of one divine Essence or Substance with them; essentially Holy in respect of his own divine Nature; for as the Son was so begotten of the Father as to be one God with him, in like manner the Holy Ghost so proceedeth from the Father and the Son, that he is one and the same God that they are.

Rom. 8. 9.
1 Pet. 1. 11.
Gal. 4. 6.

Q. What is the peculiar Office of the Holy Spirit?

A. To sanctifie and renew our corrupt Nature, and to restore it to its primitive Perfection and Dignity. For since without Holiness it is impossible to please God, or attain that Happiness which consists in the enjoyment of him.

And

and that the Frailty and Weakness, as well as the Corruption of our Nature, is so great, that we are not able of our selves to accomplish this mighty Work; God has been graciously pleased to grant to us his Holy Spirit, to be the Author of all internal Holiness, and the Principle of our Spiritual Life; and consequently 'tis this blessed Spirit gives *Clearness* to our Faith, *Zeal* to our Charity, and *Strength* and *Power* to all our Graces.

Q. *When may the Holy Spirit be said to give clearness to our Faith?*

A. Not only when he *reveals* to us the *Will of God*, which he has *externally* proposed in the *Holy Scriptures*; but when he *internally* illuminates our Minds, and inclines them to the *Obedience of Faith*, whereby we firmly assent to those Truths, which unto a natural or carnal Man are foolishness. When the *Belief* of the *Principles of Religion* is *vigorous* enough to govern our Practice, and influence our Lives; when the *Torments* of the *Damned* make us afraid to follow them in their Sins, which have brought upon them all those Miseries, when they put us upon striving against every Temptation to avoid the Danger. When the *Glories* of the *Saints* persuade us to imitate their Lives, which have raised them to that Happiness: When the hope of seeing God, purifieth us as he is pure, by seeking all occasions of our Improvement, and by making it our business to work out our Salvation.

Q. *When may the Holy Spirit be said to add Zeal to our Charity?*

A. Not only when the *Love of God* secures our own *Duty*; but when it makes us *earnestly*

Q

concerned

concerned that all the World should be influenced by the same divine Flame, and that our Neighbour should become a fit Object of infinite Mercy. When we are sensibly touched with the Blindness and Obstinacy of wicked Christians; and endeavour by the properest methods to cure their *Ignorance*, and to remove their great *Indifference* as to the business of Religion. When we are careful to *insinuate* and establish the Maxims of Piety in our Families, and among our Friends and Relations; when our Discourse and Conversation is edifying, and tinged with a relish of Religion; when we recommend it by our own Example, and by our Prayers, for the Conversion of Sinners, and for the Perseverance of the Righteous. When we conceal all things that may offend the weak, and publish whatever may tend to increase the Love of Virtue; when we take all occasions to praise those that live well, to honour them before the World, and to give them the preference in those Favours we are able to confer; when the Civilities and Liberalities we exercise, and the Friendships we contract, aim at the Conversion and Sanctification of Souls; when the Comfort and Relief we give to the Poor, the Sick, and the Afflicted, tends to make the design of God's Providence towards them effectual, for their amendment if they are bad, or for their improvement if they are good; that they may learn to adore the Author of their Afflictions, and wisely fix their Minds upon a Good that is stable and permanent.

Q. When may the Holy Spirit be said to give Power and Strength to our Graces?

A. Not only when the Empire of Reason is secured

ſecured againſt the *Attacks* of the *inferiour Appetite*; but when our evil Inclinations are in ſome meaſure ſtified, and that all *carnal Affections die in us*. When the *Allurements* of the *World*, and the Enjoyments of *Senſe* appear as trifling *Entertainments*, in compariſon of the *pleaſure and happineſs* of ſerving God and doing Good. When the *Difficulties* and *Dangers* we meet with in the road of our *Duty* are ſo far from diſcouraging us, that they raiſe our *Spirits*, and increaſe our *Reſolution*, and ſerve only to make the *Pleaſures of Vertue* more perfect. When the *bearing and forgiving Injuries*, the *mortifying our ſenſual Appetites*, and the *ſuffering for Righteouſneſs*, which to worldly *Minds* carry ſo terrible an Appearance, are embraced with *Joy and Satisfaction*, as the happy opportunities of manifeſting a ſincere and ardent Affection to the bleſſed Jeſus. When we receive the *Afflictions* of Life not only with *Patience* and *Submission*, but with *Thankfulneſs*, from a ſenſe of that *Profit and Advantage* they may bring to us. Theſe effects were viſible in the *Conduct* of the *holy Apoſtles*; never did ſo much *Reſolution* get the better of ſo much *Weakneſs*, ſo great a contempt of *Danger*, and *Death* triumph over ſo ſhameful a *Cowardice*, and ſo ſincere and ardent a deſire of *Suffering* maſter a very careful Endeavour to avoid the appearance of it.

The PRAYERS.

I.

GOD, who at this time didst teach the Hearts of thy faithful People, by the sending to them the Light of thy Holy Spirit; Grant me by the same Spirit to have a right Understanding in all things, and evermore to rejoyce in his Holy Comfort, through the Merits of Christ Jesus my Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the Unity of the same Spirit, one God World without end. *Amen.*

II.

Almighty and merciful God, of whose only Gift it cometh, that thy faithful People do unto thee true and laudable Service; Grant, I beseech thee, that I may so faithfully serve thee in this Life, that I fail not finally to attain thy heavenly Promises, through the Merits of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

III.

Almighty God, who shewest to them that abide in Error the Light of thy Truth, to the intent they may return into the way of Righteousness; Grant unto all them that are admitted into the Fellowship of Christ's Religion, that they may eschew those things that are contrary to their Profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

IV.

IV.

O Lord my God, who by thy Son our Savi-^{Dean}
our Jesus Christ, hast promised thy Holy ^{Hickes.}
Spirit to them who ask him of thee; I beseech
thee to give him to me in all the Graces and
Assistances of which I stand in need. I ask him
in all Humility and Earnestness, as the greatest
Blessing I can receive; I ask him in the sense of
my own Weakness and Infirmities, as knowing
without his continual Inspirations I can desire
nothing that is good, or do any thing that is ac-
ceptable to thee: O therefore let him be with
me, and remain with me, and most powerfully
assist and support me in all Trials and Tempta-
tions when I most need his Help.

Let him be unto me a Spirit of Sanctification
to purifie my corrupt Nature; a Spirit of Coun-
cil in all Difficulties; of Direction in all Doubts,
of Courage in all Dangers; of Constancy in all
Persecutions; of Comfort in all Troubles, espe-
cially in Times of Sicknes and at the Hour of
Death, and of Submission and Resignation to
thy Holy Will and Pleasure in all Afflictions
that are most grievous to Flesh and Blood.

Leave me not a moment to my own humane
Frailty without his Assistance; but let him con-
stantly inspire me with Fear, Love and Devotion
towards thee; with Truth, Justice and Charity
towards my Neighbour; and with Abstinence
and Sobriety towards my self. And because I
live in evil Times, and am in danger of being
deceived by the Wiles and false Pretensions of
Men, let him be also unto me a Spirit of Wis-
dom and Conduct and Discretion, that in all my
Conversations I may be able to discern Truth
from

from Hypocrisie; and sincere, undesigning and faithful, from false, designing and flattering Friends.

Furthermore I beseech thee, let him be unto me a Spirit of Patience under all Crosses, and in all Provocations; a Spirit of Trust and steadfast Repose of Mind in thy Care and Providence; a Spirit of Forgiveness to my Enemies; a Spirit of Humility to make me quiet and easie in my self, meek and gentle to others, and to free me from all the Sin and Torment of Pride, Envy and Ambition; and finally so let him guide me and govern me through the whole Course of my short Life here, that I may not fail to obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

V.

This very meet, right, and my bounden Duty, that I should at all Times and in all Places, give Thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, Almighty everlasting God: through Jesus Christ our Lord, according to whose most true Promise, the Holy Ghost came down as at this time from Heaven, with a sudden great Sound, as it had been a mighty Wind, in the likeness of fiery Tongues lighting upon the Apostles, to teach them and to lead them into all Truth; giving them both the Gift of divers Languages, and also Botaness, with fervent Zeal, constantly to preach the Gospel unto all Nations, whereby we have been brought out of Darkness and Error into the clear Light and true Knowledge of thee and thy Son Jesus Christ: Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the Company of Heaven, I laud and magnifie thy glorious

glorious Name, evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, Heaven and Earth are full of thy Glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most High. *Amen.*

C H A P. XX.

Trinity Sunday. A Moveable Feast.

Q. *What Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?*

A. The Mystery of the Blessed Trinity.

Q. *What is meant by the Trinity in the Christian Church?*

A. That there is One God in Three distinct Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Q. *What is God?*

A. An Eternal, Incomprehensible Spirit, Infinite in all Perfections; who made all things out of nothing, and who governs them by his wise Providence.

Q. *What is meant by the word Person?*

A. It signifies the Essence with a particular manner of Subsistence, which the Greek Fathers called *Hypostasis*, taking it for the incommunicable Property that makes a Person.

Q. *Why do we believe the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be three distinct Persons in the Divine Nature?*

A. Because the Holy Scriptures in speaking of these three, do distinguish them from one

another, as we use in common Speech to distinguish three several Persons.

Q. What Instances have we in the Holy Scriptures to this purpose?

A. Several; more particularly the Form in administering the Sacrament of Baptism, which
Mat. 28. 19. is in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And that solemn Benediction with which St. Paul concludes most of his Epistles:
2 Cor. 13. The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost. And the three Witnesses in Heaven, mentioned
1 John 5. 7. by St. John, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost.

Q. How does it appear that each of these Persons is God?

A. Because the Names, Properties, and Operations of God, are attributed to each of them in the Holy Scriptures.

Q. Where are the Names, Properties, and Operations of God, attributed to the second Person in the blessed Trinity, the Son?

A. St. John says, The Word was God; St. Paul, That God was manifested in the Flesh. That Christ is over all, God blessed for ever. That the Word of God is sharper than a two-edged Sword, and is a Discerner of the Thoughts and Intent's of the Heart. Eternity is attributed to him, the Son hath Life in himself. He is the same, and his Tears shall not fail. Perfection of Knowledge, As the Father knoweth me, so know I the Father. The Creation of all things. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made, And we are commanded, to honour the Son as we honour the Father, And the glorified Saints sing their Hallelujahs

allelujahs as to God the Father, so also to the Lamb
for ever and ever.

Q. Where are the Names, Properties, and
Operations of God, attributed to the third Per-
son in the blessed Trinity, the Holy Ghost?

A. Lying to the Holy Ghost is called Lying Acts 5. 3, 4.
to God. And because Christians are the Tem- 1 Cor. 3. 16.
ples of the Holy Ghost, they are said to be the
Temples of God. His teaching all things. His
guiding into all Truth. His telling things to
come. His searching all things, even the deep
things of God. His being called the Spirit of
the Lord, in opposition to the Spirit of Man,
are plain Characters of his Divinity. Besides,
he is joined with God the Father, who will not
impart his Glory to another, as an Object, of Mat. 28. 19.
Faith and Worship in Baptism and the apostoli- 2 Cor. 13.
cal Benediction, And the Blasphemy committed 14.
against him is said to be forgiven neither in Mat. 12. 32.
this World, nor the World to come. Which,
altho' it be not therefore unpardonable because
he is God, yet unless he was God it could not
be unpardonable.

Q. What are we obliged to believe concerning
the Holy Trinity?

A. That there is but one living and true God Artic. 1.
everlasting, without Body, Parts or Passions, of
infinite Power, Wisdom and Goodness, the Ma-
ker and Preserver of all things, both visible and
invisible, and in the Unity of this Godhead
there be three Persons, of one Substance, Power
and Eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy
Ghost.

Q. Wherein consists the Mystery of the blessed
Trinity?

A. In that we are not able to comprehend the
particular

particular manner of the Existence of the *three Persons* in the *Divine Nature*.

Q. Is it reasonable to believe things concerning God, which we cannot comprehend?

A. The Perfections of the Divine Nature are infinite, and consequently above our reach; and therefore if there be such Divine Perfections, which our Faculties are not sufficient to comprehend, and yet that we have all imaginable Reason to believe them; there can be no ground from Reason to reject such a Doctrine which God has revealed, tho' very mysterious, and the manner of it incomprehensible to us; since Natural Light did always acknowledge the Divine Nature to be incomprehensible.

Q. But tho' this Doctrine of the Trinity is above Reason, in that we cannot comprehend the manner of it; is it not also contrary to Reason? And does it not imply a Contradiction to say, the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and yet that there are not three Gods but one God?

A. No: Because we do not affirm they are *one and three* in the same respect. The *Divine Essence* is that alone which makes God; that can be but one, and therefore there can be no more Gods than one; but because the *Scriptures* which assure us of the *Unity* of the *Divine Essence*, do likewise with the *Father* joyn the *Son* and *Holy Ghost*, in the same Attributes, Operations and Worship; therefore they are capable of number as to their relation to each other, but not as to their *Essence*, which is but one.

Q. Is any farther Explication of this great Mystery necessary?

A. I think it, with submission, not necessary;
it

it being sufficient firmly to believe that to be true, which God hath thought fit to reveal concerning this matter ; tho' at the same time we do not perfectly comprehend the manner of the thing which is the Object of our Faith : Besides, the Attempt as it is attended with great difficulty, so with great danger ; the Enemies of our Faith being ready to wound the holy Doctrine thro' the sides of our Explications. This method St. Chrysostom, who is justly placed in the first Rank of the Learned and Pious Fathers, observed. When he treated upon the Mysteries of the Christian Religion, he proves them from the Testimonies of Holy Writ, and the Universal Belief of Christians, without pretending to make them clearer by a nice Explication.

S. Cyr. Hier. catech. XI. p. 144.

Orat. 1. de incompreh. Homil. 24. in Joan.

Q. *Are there any Footsteps of the Doctrine of the Trinity among the Jews and Gentiles ?*

A. There has been a very ancient Tradition concerning three Persons in the Divine Nature. The Jews did distinguish the Word of God and the Holy Spirit of God, from him whom they look'd upon as the first Principle of all things ; as is plain from Philo Judeus, and Moses Nachmanides, as cited by Grotius. And among the Heathens, Plato made three Distinctions in the Deity, by the Names of essential Goodness, Mind and Spirit.

De Verit. Christ. Relig.

Q. *What Use may we make of this ?*

A. That neither the Jews nor Gentiles have any reason to object this Doctrine to us Christians ; especially since they have only their own Reason or Tradition to ground it upon ; whereas we have express Divine Revelation for what we believe in this matter, and do believe it singly upon that Account.

Q. *What*

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. To submit our *Reason* to the *Obedience of Faith*. To believe what we are sufficiently assured God has revealed, tho' we cannot comprehend it, because the *Incomprehensibility* of a thing is no concluding *Argument* against the *Truth* of it; the *Perfections* of the *Deity* being in their own *Nature* infinite. To contain our selves within the *Bounds of Sobriety*, without wading too far into *abstruse, curious and useless Speculations*. To admire and adore the most glorious *Trinity*, as being the *Joint Authors* of our *Salvation*. To acknowledge the transcendent *Love* of God towards us, in giving his only begotten *Son*, by an eternal *Generation*, to die for us *Sinners*; and the wonderful *Condescension* of our dear *Redeemer*, the *Merits* of whose *Sufferings* were enhanced by the *Dignity* and *Excellency* of his *Person*. Never to grieve that *Eternal Spirit*, by whose *gracious Influences*, we are made *Partakers* of *Everlasting Salvation*.

Q. If we are bound to believe such Doctrines of Christianity as we cannot comprehend, is there any use of Reason in Religion?

A. Yes certainly; for nothing can be a greater *Reflection* upon *Religion*, than to say it is *Unreasonable*, that it contradicts that *Natural Light* which God has fix'd in our *Minds*, and that it declines a fair and impartial *Trial*, and will not bear the *Test* of a thorough *Examination*. Therefore the ancient *Fathers*, the great *Pillars* of our *Faith*, in all their *Apologies* for the *Christian Religion* against *Jews* and *Gentiles*, endeavour to convince the *World* by all rational ways both

of

of the Truth and Reasonableness of the Christian Religion; and tho' the Apostles were divinely inspired, yet the *Bereans* are commended *Acts 17. 11.* for inquiring into the Reasons of Believing that Doctrine which they taught; and where Infidelity in *Scripture* is charged as a Crime, 'tis where sufficient Reason and Evidence was offer'd for Conviction.

Q. What then is the use of Reason in Religion?

A. It discovers to us the Principles of *Natural Religion*, and justifies the Wisdom and Prudence of Acting according to them. It shews the conveniency of things to our Natures, and the tendency of them to our Happiness and Interest; that as we are thereby convinced, that Piety towards God, that Justice, Gratitude and Mercy towards Men, are agreeable to our Natures, so Reason discovers to us that these Duties are good, because they bring Benefit and Advantage to us. And as to *Revealed Religion*: It is the Faculty whereby the Evidence and Proof of it is to be tried; the proper Exercise of Reason in a Christian being to examine and enquire whether what is proposed and required to be believed, is revealed by God; whether it comes with the true Credentials of his Authority, and has him really for its Author. For our Assent to any thing as revealed by God, must be grounded upon Evidence that it comes from him. And when by proper Arguments we are convinced of the divine Authority of the Revelation, Reason assists us in discerning the true and genuine Sense of such a Revelation, and helps us to apply general Rules contained in it, to all manner of special Cases whatsoever. And
when

when we are satisfied that a Doctrine is revealed by God, though it is above the reach of our Comprehension, yet we have the strongest and most cogent Reason in the World to believe it. Because God is infinitely Wise and Omniscient, and therefore cannot be deceived ; and being infinitely Good, we may be sure he will not deceive us.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

O Holy, Blessed and Glorious Trinity, three Persons and one God, have Mercy upon me a miserable Sinner.

Almighty and Everlasting God, who hast given unto thy Servants Grace, by the Confession of a true Faith to acknowledge the Glory of the Eternal Trinity, and in the Power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity ; I beseech thee, that thou would'st keep me stedfast in this Faith, and evermore defend me from all Adversities, who livest and reignest, one God, World without end. *Amen.*

II.

IT is very meet, right, and my bounden Duty, that I should at all times, and in all places, give Thanks unto thee, O Lord, Almighty everlasting God ; who art one God, one Lord, not one only Person, but three Persons in one Substance ; for that which I believe of the Glory of the Father, the same I believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality : Therefore with Angels and Archangels,

angels, and with all the Company of Heaven, I laud and magnifie thy glorious Name, evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts; Heaven and Earth are full of thy Glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most High. *Amen.*

III.

O Lord, I beseech thee, to keep thy Church and Household continually in thy true Religion; that they who do lean only upon the Hope of thy heavenly Grace, may evermore be defended by thy mighty Power, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

IV.

Glory be to thee, O God the Father, for making Man after thy own Image, capable of loving thee, and enjoying thee eternally; for recovering him from a state of Sin and Misery, when he had lost and undone himself.

Glory be to thee, O God the Son, for undertaking the wonderful Work of Man's Redemption; for rescuing him from the Slavery of Sin, and Dominion of the Devil; for, in order to accomplish this Miracle of Goodness thou didst descend from Heaven, put on the Form of a Servant, live a miserable Life, and die a painful and accursed Death.

Glory be to thee, O God the Holy Ghost, for those miraculous Gifts and Graces thou didst bestow upon the Apostles; and for those ordinary Gifts whereby sincere Christians in all Ages are enabled to work out their Salvation; for thy preventing and restraining Grace, for subduing
our

our Understandings and Affections to the Obedience of Faith and Godliness; for inspiring us with good Thoughts, and kindling pious Desires in our Souls; for assisting us in all the methods of procuring Eternal Happiness.

Blessing and Honour, Thanksgiving and Praise, more than I can utter, more than I can conceive, be unto thee, O most adorable Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by all Angels, all Men, all Creatures, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

C H A P. XXI.

St. Barnabas the Apostle. June 11.

Q. *What Festival does the Church this Day celebrate?*

A. That of the Apostle St. Barnabas.

Q. *What Account is there of his Original?*

A. That he was born at Cyprus, and descended of the Tribe of Levi, whose Jewish Ancestors probably fled thither in the troublesome times in Judea, to secure themselves from Violence and Invasion. His proper Name was *Joses*, a softer Termination, familiar with the Greeks, for *Joseph*; given him at his Circumcision in honour of *Joseph*, one of the great Patriarchs of that Nation.

Q. *Why was he by the Apostles surnamed Barnabas, which signifies the Son of Consolation?*

A. Some think for his eminent Prophetick Gifts, and his dexterity in managing troubled Minds; for he was a good Man, full of Faith, and

Afts 4. 36.

Afts 11. 24.

and of the Holy Ghost. Tho' if we consider the occasion of imposing this Name, it seems to have been an honourable Acknowledgement of his Charity in selling his whole Estate for the Relief of the poor Christians, and upon the account of the Consolation they received thereby. Acts 4. 37.

Q. Where was he educated?

A. His Parents being Rich and Pious, he was sent to *Jerusalem*, to be trained up in the knowledge of the Law, and was committed to the Care of that great Doctor *Gamaliel*; which probably might lay the Foundation of that intimate Friendship which was afterwards contracted between this Apostle and *St. Paul*.

Q. When was he converted to Christianity?

A. The particular time is uncertain, tho' by the Ancients he is generally esteemed one of the Seventy Disciples chosen by our Saviour. And *Euseb. lib. 1. C. 12.* he gave an early proof of his Christian Zeal, in selling his Lands for the Support of his Christian Brethren. And tho' he was of the Tribe of *Levi*, to whom the *Mosaic* Law allowed no particular Possessions; yet we may reasonably suppose this Estate was his Patrimonial Inheritance at *Cyprus*, where the *Jewish* Constitutions did not take place.

Q. What Assistance did St. Barnabas give St. Paul after his Conversion?

A. When the Christians at *Jerusalem* were not thoroughly satisfied with *St. Paul's* change, apprehending it might be only a subtile Art to ensnare them; *St. Barnabas* introduced him to the Apostles, and declared to them the manner of his Conversion; and what Evidence he had given of it at *Damascus* in his bold Disputations with the *Jews*. Acts 9. 27.

R

Q. What

Q. What was his first Employment in the Service of the Church?

Act. 11. 22. *A.* News from *Antioch* being brought to the Church at *Jerusalem*, that many in that City had embraced Christianity, *St. Barnabas* was sent to settle this new Plantation. Upon his Arrival he rejoiced extremely to see what progress the Gospel had made among them, and not only
V. 23. exhorted them with *purpose of Heart* to cleave unto the Lord, but by his Labours added many to the Church: And the Work growing too great
V. 25, 26. for a single Hand, he went to *Tarsus* and engages *St. Paul* to return with him to *Antioch*, where they both laboured together a whole Year in the Establishment of that Church.

Q. When were the Followers of Jesus called Christians?

A. About this time at *Antioch*. They who
Acts 9. 26. first embraced the Faith were stiled *Disciples* or
5. 14. *Believers*, the *Brethren*, or *Men of the Church*,
6. 3. or *Callers upon the Name of Christ*, or *Men of*
12. 1. *the Way*, or by their Enemies *Nazarenes* or *Ga-*
9. 14. *lileons*: But *Christians* was the name they after-
19. 9. wards gloried in so much, that before the Face
24. 5. of their Enemies, they would acknowledge no
2. 7. other Title, tho' hated, reviled, tormented and martyr'd for it.

Q. What Obligation does that holy Name lay upon us?

A. To believe and practise what Christ taught
Heb. 2. 10. to imitate his Example, who was made *perfect thro' Sufferings*, to cleave with *purpose of Heart* to the Lord, and to avoid all manner of Evil which we solemnly renounced when we took up on us that Name.

Q. What

Q. What was the next piece of Service St. Barnabas did the Church?

A. He with St. Paul carried a charitable Supply from the Christians at *Antioch*, to relieve the Brethren in *Judea*, who were reduced to great Necessities by a severe Famine that afflicted the Provinces of the Roman Empire, and particularly *Judea*. Act. 11. 30.

Q. How was St. Barnabas called to the Conversion of the Gentile World?

A. By the particular Designation of the Holy Ghost, who by Revelation made to the Prophets and Teachers of the Church of *Antioch*, when they were engaged in Fasting and Prayer, and other publick Exercises of Religion, commanded that he should be set apart with St. Paul to that purpose. Acts 13. 2.

Q. In what Manner was this Designation to the Service of the Church performed?

A. Fasting and Prayer preceded, and then Imposition of Hands: An ancient Ceremony transferred from the *Jews* into the Christian Church, in ordaining Guides and Ministers of Religion, and which has been so used thro' all Ages to this Day. v. 3.

Q. Where did St. Barnabas, being joined with St. Paul, preach the Gospel?

A. At *Cyprus* his Native Country, where at *Paphos*, a remarkable City of that Island for the Worship of *Venus*, the Governour *Sergius Paulus* was converted; they sailed from thence to *Perga* in *Pamphilia*, where *Mark* his Kinsman, and their Companion, left them, discouraged by the Dangers they met with; after three Years Travel thro' the lesser *Asia*, with various Success, preaching the Gospel to several Cities, they returned again to *Antioch* in *Syria*. v. 4.

Act. 14. 12. Q. *Why is it supposed that the Men of Lystra compared St. Barnabas to Jupiter their Sovereign Deity?*

A. Either because of his Age, or for the Gravity and Comeliness of his Person, being, as *Antiquity* represents him, of a very venerable Aspect.

Q. *How did St. Barnabas carry himself in the Controversie between the Jewish and Gentile Converts?*

Acts 51. 2. A. He at first opposed the *Judaizers* with great Vigour, and went with St. Paul to consult the Church at *Jerusalem*, where that matter was determined by a *Synodical Decree* of the Apostles and Elders; but afterwards being drawn aside by the Conduct of St. Peter, he dissembled his Christian Liberty to please the *Jewish* Converts; which his Companion St. Paul reprov'd in him.

Q. *What was the occasion of the Contest between St. Paul and St. Barnabas?*

Acts 15, 37, &c. A. These two holy Men having agreed to visit the Churches they had planted in *Asia*, St. Barnabas propos'd the taking his Kinsman *Mark* along with them; St. Paul would not consent to it, because in their former Travels *Mark* had consulted too much his own Ease and Safety, and had left them at *Pamphilia*.

Q. *What was the Issue of this Dispute?*

A. That after a joint Labour in their Ministry, for several Years, the Contention was so sharp between them that they parted. St. Paul with *Silas* went to the Churches of *Syria* and *Cilicia*, and St. Barnabas with *Mark* to his own Country *Cyprus*.

Q. *How did the Providence of God make the separation*

separation of these Apostles turn to the Benefit of the Church?

A. By making Christianity thereby become more diffusive, than if they had still continued together; and that *Mark* by St. Paul's Severity, was brought to a sense of his former Indifferency in the Work of the Gospel, and became so useful a Minister of Christ, that he deserved not only to be a Companion of St. Paul, but received from him a high Testimony of his Zeal, *that he was profitable to him for the Ministry.* 2 Tim. 4. 11.

Q. What became of St. Barnabas after this?

A. The Scriptures are silent concerning it. Some Writers say, he went into *Italy*, and preached the Gospel at *Rome*, and founded a Church at *Milan*, tho' it is most probable he spent the remainder of his Life at *Cyprus* in converting his own Country-men the *Jews*; as may be gueſt from the *Epistle* he writ, which seems manifestly designed for their Benefit.

Q. Where did he suffer Martyrdom?

A. 'Tis thought at *Salamis*, a City in the Island of *Cyprus*; whither some *Jews* being come from *Syria*, set upon him as he was disputing in the *Synagogue*; in a corner whereof they shut him up till Night, when they brought him forth, and after exquisite Tortures stoned him to Death; he was buried by his Kinsman *Mark* in a Cave not far distant from that City. The Remains of his Body are said to be discovered in the Reign of *Zeno* the Emperor, A. C. 485. and St. *Matthew's* Gospel written in *Hebrew* by St. *Barnabas's* own Hand, lying upon his Breast.

Q. What Writings did St. Barnabas leave behind him?

R 3

A. Only

A. Only one *Epistle*, which all the *Ancients* attributed to him as the Author. And tho' St. *Jerome* calls it *Apocryphal*, yet by that is to be understood only that it was not admitted into the *Canon* of the Church. The main Design of it is to shew that the Christian Religion has superceded the Rites and Usages of the *Mosaick Law*. The latter part of it contains an useful and excellent Exhortation, managed under the Notion of two *Ways*, the one of *Light*, the other of *Darkness*; the one under the Conduct of the *Angels of God*, the other under the Guidance of the *Angels of Satan*. The Way of *Light* is a *Summary* of what a Christian is to do, that he may attain eternal Happiness; and the Way of *Darkness* represents those particular Sins and Vices which exclude People from the Kingdom of God; he closes the whole with pressing Christians to live so that they may be blessed to all Eternity.

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. To despise Ease, and even Life it self, when we have any happy Opportunity of propagating Christian Knowledge, and to rejoyce in any Success of that nature. To compassionate the Infirmities of our Brethren, whose Zeal moves in a low Sphere. To be ready to contribute to the Relief of our Fellow-Christians; and when their Necessities are great and pressing, to abridge our selves of some Conveniences, rather than suffer them to be oppressed with Want. To remember what Belief and Practice is implied in the venerable Name of a *Christian*, and to depart from all Iniquity, lest we forfeit our Interest in that Faith. To have
a greater

a greater Regard to the Rule and Measure of our Duty, than the Example of the best Men, by whom we ought not to be influenced to do any thing we think bad. That since Men are subject to different Thoughts in particular Matters, to avoid all subjects of Strife and Contention; or to maintain Debates without breach of Charity, which requires no small Degree of Perfection.

Q. How are Civil Differences to be managed among Christians?

A. We ought never to prosecute any *Civil Difference* purely upon the account of *Revenge*, when there is no prospect of compensating our own Loss; nay we ought rather to recede from our own Right in small Matters, and exercise our Patience, than to expose our selves to the Evils and Temptations of going to *Law*. But when the Matter is of Weight and Importance, we must be watchful over our selves, lest we contract Guilt in the pursuit of it; by delaying of Justice, by any Arts of circumventing our Adversary, or by suggesting false Pleas, only to procure time, and make the Suit expensive and vexatious; by envying any Good, or rejoycing at any Evil that happens to him. All which are against that *Justice* and *Charity* which we owe to an Adversary, who is still our Neighbour, and ought to be treated as such.

Q. How ought Religious Differences to be debated among Christians?

A. With a greater regard to the discovery of *Truth*, than to the establishing a *Reputation* for Learning and Knowledge. Without throwing *Scorn* and *Contempt* upon those that oppose us; because if they are under the Power of Error;

they are Objects of Christian Compassion ; and are made unfit to receive the impression of good Arguments, by being prejudiced and provoked by ill Treatment. Without *railing* and *injurious Reflections*, which no way concern the Cause, and which are by good Manners banish'd Conversation, and therefore are undecent to be used in writing. Without *detracting* from the real worth of our Adversaries, and charging them with believing Consequences which we know they abhor. Without ever suffering our *Passions* to vent themselves under a Pretence of *Zeal for God's Glory*, but to give an Account of our Faith, with that *Meekness* that governs the unreasonable Sallies of Anger, and with that *Fear* which makes us cautious not to transgress those Rules of Charity, which we are obliged to observe towards our Neighbour.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

O Lord God Almighty, who didst endue thy holy Apostle *Barnabas* with singular Gifts of the Holy Ghost; leave me not, I beseech thee, destitute of thy manifold Gifts, nor yet of Grace to use them always to thy Honour and Glory, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

O Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly Wills and Affections of sinful Men; grant unto thy Servant that I may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise; that so among
the

the sundry and manifold Changes of the World,
my Heart may surely there be fix'd, where true
Joys are to be found, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

III.

Almighty God, who hast Compassion upon
all Men, and hatest nothing that thou hast
made; teach me from the Example of thy Good-
ness and the sense of my own Unworthiness, to
have a tender regard to the Weakness and
Frailties of my Brethren; to make the best Con-
struction of all their Actions, to interpret all
doubtful things to their Advantage; and chari-
tably to bear with their apparent Infirmities.
Make me ready upon all Occasions to contribute
to the Relief of their bodily Necessities, that
they may share with me in the good things thou
hast bestowed upon me. And let me so improve
all those Talents, of any kind thou hast intrust-
ed me with for their Advantage, that I may be
able to give a good Account of my Stewardship
when the great Judge shall appear, the Lord
Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

IV.

Give me, O Lord, that Wisdom from above
that is peaceable and gentle and easie to
be intreated: That I may never prosecute my
Neighbour to gratifie the unreasonable Passions
of my own corrupt Nature; nor take delight
in his Sufferings, when I can have no other Re-
compence from his Punishment: Make me wil-
ling rather to suffer some Injuries than expose
my self to those Evils and Temptations that I
am liable to in procuring legal Satisfaction: And
whenever

whenever I am engaged in such Disputes, grant me, O Lord, the help of thy Grace, that I may ever contend for Right more than Victory, that no Profit or Advantage may prevail upon me to transgress the Laws of Justice and Charity, nor provoke me to any unchristian Behaviour against my Adversary, but that in all Prosecutions I may preserve a charitable and equitable Disposition. And thou, O God, who art never wanting to those that seek thee with an upright Mind, arm me with Meekness and Fear in all those Debates that relate to thy Holy Truth; that I may sincerely desire *that* may always prevail, and that I may never sacrifice brotherly Love and Christian Charity in the Defence of it, knowing that the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteousness of God: Grant this, O Lord, for *Jesus Christ* his sake. *Amen.*

C H A P. XXII.

The Nativity of St. John Baptist. June 24.

Q. *What Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?*

A. The Nativity of St. John Baptist.

Q. *Why does the Church celebrate his Nativity?*

A. Because his Birth was wonderful in it self, as being foretold by an *Angel* sent on purpose to deliver this joyful Message; and when his Mother *Elizabeth* was barren, and both his Parents well
stricken

stricken in Years, and in that his Father *Zachary* had the assurance of it confirmed to him by a *miraculous Dumbness* till it was made good. Besides, it brought great Joy to all those that expected the *Messias*, it being predicted by the *Angel* that *many should rejoyce thereat*.

Q. *What was foretold of him by the Angel?*

A. That he should be great in the sight of the Lord, and should neither drink Wine nor strong Drink; that he should be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his Mother's Womb; that he should convert many of the *Jews*, and prepare the way of the Lord, and consequently be the Forerunner of our Saviour, and the greatest of all the Prophets.

Q. *What mean you by St. John's being the Forerunner of our Saviour?*

A. That his whole Ministry tended to prepare the way for the reception of our Saviour and his Doctrine: For which he was qualified by adding to the grace of his Birth, and extraordinary innocence of Life, which he preserved by with-drawing from all the Occasions and Temptations to Evil, and by a strict and severe Mortification, whereby he kept his Body in subjection to his Mind.

Q. *How did he prepare the way for our Saviour's Reception?*

A. By proclaiming to the *Jews* the Approach of the *Messias*; that he whom they had so long expected was nigh at hand, and that his Kingdom was ready to appear: And that therefore they should do well to break off their Sins by Repentance, and by Reformation of Life fit themselves to receive the glad Tidings of the Gospel.

Q. *Was*

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Q. Was this Forerunner of our Saviour foretold by the Prophets?

A. Yes; Isaiah calls him the Voice of him that crieth in the Wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make strait in the Desert a high Way for our God; and Malachi styles him the Messenger that was to prepare the way of the Lord. And farther describes him under the Character of Elijah the Prophet that was to turn the Hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and the Hearts of the Children to their Fathers.

Q. But how is St. John the Baptist's being the Elias that was to come reconcileable with his own denial of it?

A. It being the general persuasion of that Age, as it had been all along the prevailing Notion among the Jews, that Elias should in his own Person come to prepare the way for the Messias; St. John the Baptist might very well, as he did, deny himself to be that very Elias who had lived in the time of King Abab, of whose second coming into the World the Sanhedrim then inquired according to their mistaken construction of the Prophecy of Malachi. Now this no ways contradicts our Saviour's affirming him to be the Person foretold under the name and character of Elias, in the true signification of that Prophecy; which all Christian Interpreters think very applicable to St. John the Baptist, so like Elias in Temper, Office, and other Circumstances, that the resemblance might be a sufficient ground for the calling him by that name. The business of both was to promote a general Reformation of Manners among those who should receive their Doctrine. They were both eminent Prophets Superior to those of the same

Jam. 5. 17, 18.

King. 17.

1.

Mat. 11. 11.

same Character in their own Age. Both of singular Abstinence and Austerity, retired from the World, and distinguish'd from the Fashions of it by a particular Habit. They were both Courageous and Zealous in opposing the prevailing Corruptions of their own times, tho' the Great and the Powerful were the Supporters of them. All this plainly proves that the *Baptist* came in the *Spirit and Power of Elias*. Which sense is abundantly confirmed by all those applications that are made of *Malachi's* Prophecy in the New Testament to St. *John the Baptist*. And by returning answer, to that demand who he was? that he was the *Voice crying in the Wilderness* prophesied of by *Esaïas*, he did in effect, and by necessary consequence, affirm himself to be *Malachi's Elias*, tho' not that *Elias* they erroneously expected; because that Prophecy of *Esaïas* was acknowledged to point at the same Person with the other in *Malachi*.

1 King. 17.
4, 16.
19, 6, 7, 8.
2 King. 1. 8.
Luk. 1. 8c.
Mat. 3. 4.
1 King. 18.
Mat. 3.
Luk. 1. 15,
16, 17.
Mat. 11. 10,
&c.
Mat. 17. 10,
&c.
John 1. 23.

Mark 1. 1,
2, 3, 4.

Q. What was St. John's Education and manner of living till he enter'd upon his Office?

A. After he had providentially escaped the Executioners of *Herod* in his Childhood, he retired early into the *Desarts*, where he led a solitary and mortified Life; his Habit was a rough Garment made of Camels Hair, and a leathern Girdle; his Food was *Locusts* and wild Honey: By *Locusts*, some understand Grasshoppers, others the tops of Plants and Herbs; tho' there may be no great necessity for the change of the Word, if we consider that some *Locusts* are counted clean Meat in *Scripture*; and that they were a common Meat not only in the *Eastern* and *Southern* parts, but even in *Palestine* it self, is proved by *Bochartus*, and *Ludolphus* in his *Æthiopick*.

Mat. 3. 4.

Lev. 11. 22.

Hieroz.
part. 2. l. 4.
pick c. 7.

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pick History. The *wild Honey* is conceived to be such as the Bees had stored up in hollow Trees or Caverns, an ordinary Provision to be found in Woods.

Q. What Character does our Saviour give of St. John Baptist?

Mat. II. II. *A.* That among them that are born of Women there hath not risen a greater than *John the Baptist*, and that he came neither *eating nor drinking*, which implies a way of living more than ordinary rigorous and austere.

Q. Wherein did John the Baptist exceed those Prophets that went before him?

John I. 7. 29. 33. V. 32. Mat. 3. 5, 6. *A.* In the Excellency of his *Office*, which was to fit and prepare the Minds of the People for the immediate reception of Christ and his Doctrine; both which were attested to by *St. John* in a plainer manner than by any of the old Prophets. In that he was honoured with more signal Revelations, and his Doctrine attended with greater Success and Efficacy, almost the whole Nation flowing in to his Baptism, and confessing their Sins.

Q. How was St. John Baptist called to his Office?

Luke 3. 2. *A.* The Word of God came to him; which Phrase, as used in the *Scriptures*, implies the *Prophetick Spirit* communicated to those that were to be extraordinary Preachers to the People: But whether imparted to him by Vision or Dream, or any other way, is not so material to enquire as difficult to resolve; only we may observe, that whereas the *Spirit of Prophecy* seemed to be ceased among the *Jews* since the Death of *Malachi*, it was now revived in *John the Baptist*, and was to be continued by the great Prophet, and his Apostles.

Q. What

Q. What Success had St. John's Ministry?

A. His resolute Preaching, joined with the severity of his Life, drew to him many Hearers from *Jerusalem* and *Judea*, and from the Region Mat. 3. 5, 6. round about *Jordan*, and great was the Number of his Profelytes, who were baptized of him, confessing their Sins. For his first Preaching was in the Wilderness of *Judea*, the Towns and Cities that were about the place of his Education; and from thence he made Converts round about *Jordan*, the River whereof supplied him with a Conveniency of Baptizing the great Number of his Followers.

Q. What was the manner of his Preaching?

A. Impartially to condemn the Vices of all Luke 3. Ranks and Orders of Men, and to press upon 10, &c. them the Duties of their particular Places and Relations.

Q. Why was St. John called the Baptist?

A. Because those whom he made his *Profelytes*, he enter'd into this New Institution of Life by *Baptism*; a Rite indeed made use of by the *Jews*, but never before *St. John's* time, to figure out to them Repentance and Remission of Sins. Besides, he had the great Honour to Baptize his Mat. 3. Saviour; which tho' he modestly declined, yet 13, &c. our Lord enjoined it; and it was accompanied with a *miraculous Attestation* from Heaven.

Q. Why was St. John's Baptism called the Baptism of Repentance?

A. Because it was the first time *Baptism* was made use of to shadow out Repentance and Remission of Sins; and that was the main Qualification required of those that became his Disciples, and the fittest to dispose them to receive our Saviour, and to entitle them to that Pardon
of

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of Sin which the Gospel brought along with it?

Q. How did St. John bear Testimony of our Saviour?

A. By ingenuously declaring to the *Jews*, who had fix'd their Minds upon him, as if he were the promised *Messiah*, that he was not the *Christ*, and that there was one to come after him, *the latchet of whose shoes he was not worthy to unloose*. And he persisted in his Testimony until his Death; the Truth of which he was better qualified to attest, in that it was revealed to him by God after a more especial manner.

Luke 3. 16.

John 1. 31, 32, &c.

Mat. 11. 2, 3.

Q. But did not St. John doubt towards the end of his Life of the Truth of his Testimony, when in Prison he sent his Disciples to enquire whether our Saviour was he that should come, or whether they should look for another.

A. *St. John* could have no doubt about it himself, who had it confirmed by *Divine Revelation*; But his Disciples were the rather unwilling to acknowledge *Jesus* for the *Messias*, because they thought he did eclipse the Glory of their Master. They believed *John the Baptist* to be a *Prophet*, and that he came from God, yet they could not digest his Testimony of *Christ*, because that set him above their Master; which appears from the Complaint they made, *He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him*. Therefore *St. John* sent this Message for the Conviction of his Disciples, that when he was cut off, they might not be shaken in their Belief of *Christ*, but adhere and cleave fast to him.

John 3. 26.

Q. How and upon what Occasion was St. John Baptist put to Death?

A. He was beheaded by the Command of *Herod*,

Herod, who was provoked by his freedom in re-
proving him for his Adultery and Incestuous Em-
braces; that Prince keeping *Herodias* his Brother
Philip's Wife. Tho' *Josephus* makes the Motive
of it to proceed from *Herod's* Apprehension of
St. John's Popularity, which might occasion some
Innovation or Insurrection.

Q. How was Herod, who feared the Multi-
tude that counted St. John a Prophet, prevailed
upon to put him to Death?

A. By the Arts and Intrigues of *Herodias*, v. 6.
whose Daughter dancing before *Herod* upon his
Birth-Day pleased him so extreamly, that he
promised to give her what she would ask, and
confirmed it with an Oath. Being instructed by
her Mother, she demands the Head of *St. John*
the Baptist; which *Herod*, upon pretence of Re-
verence to his Oath, ordered, though with some
regret, to be performed.

Q. Why is Herod said to be sorry upon the Re-
quest that was made?

A. Because such an Execution was improper
at the Celebration of so great a Festival; besides,
Herod seems to have had some Reverence for his
Character, esteeming *St. John* a just and holy
Person, and heard him gladly: Add to this, that
he was uncertain how the People would resent
it, since they counted *St. John* a Prophet.

Q. How was John the Baptist esteemed among
the Jews?

A. We are assured by *Josephus*, that he was
a Pattern of all Vertue; and that he continually
pressed his Countrymen the Jews to the Practice
of Justice towards Men, and Piety towards God;
that he exhorted them to receive his Baptism;
assuring them it would be well-pleasing to God,

if they not only renounced their Sins, but to the Purity of the Body added that of the Soul. And such was their Opinion of his Sanctity, that they attributed the Overthrow of that Army *Herod* sent against his Father-in-law *Aretas* (who fell out with him about the Divorce of his Daughter, effected in order to take *Herodias*, his Brother's Wife) to the just Judgment of God, as a Punishment for putting *John* the Baptist to Death.

Antiq. Jud.
lib. 18. c. 7.

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. That true Greatness consists in the Contempt of the World, and that in the midst of the Enjoyments of it, we can never be really Disciples of Christ without Poverty of Spirit. That the best means to preserve our Innocence, is to retire as much as may be from the Occasions and Temptations of Evil. To set a strict Guard upon our Senses, and by frequent Mortification to keep our Bodies in subjection to our Minds. That an unlawful Oath no ways obliges him that takes it; the taking of it is a Sin must be repented of, but the breaking of it is a necessary Duty, and a Branch of that Repentance which is due for the former Rashness in making it. That the true Worth of Men ought not to be measured by their outward Circumstances in this World, since the greatest of Prophets suffer'd the Indignities of a Prison, and fell by the Hands of a common Executioner. To take all prudent means to reprove the Vices of others, when the Providence of God gives us a fair Opportunity; which ought always to be managed with great Discretion, if we intend to do good the only end to be aimed at in it.

Q. Wherein

Q. Wherein consists the Nature of Reproof?

A. In putting our Neighbour in mind of his Duty when he transgresses the Laws of God; in representing to him his Faults, with their several Aggravations, and the dangerous Consequences that attend them; that by a seasonable Warning he may be recovered to a right Sense of things, and that his Soul may be preserved from that Ruine that otherways threatens it.

Q. Whence arises the Obligation of a Christian to perform this Duty?

A. From that *Christian Charity* and *Compassionate Concern* he ought to have for the Souls of Men, made after the *Image of God*, and purchased by the precious *Blood of Christ*, which run great hazard of perishing without such faithful Admonitions. For Self-love is so rooted in our Nature, and we have that Partiality to our selves, that very often either we do not see our Miscarriages, or at least not in their true Light; and therefore 'tis necessary some charitable Hand should make the Discovery clear to us. And in many Cases, except we perform this Duty, we cannot preserve our selves from Guilt: For those who are entrusted with any degree of Authority, as *Magistrates, Parents, and Masters*, are answerable for those Faults which are owing to their Connivance and Encouragement. Besides, all Professions of Friendship without the use of such Freedoms will be apt to degenerate into Flattery; and 'tis in vain we pretend to be ready and willing to serve our Friends, when we neglect doing them that solid Good, which the Interest we have in them qualifies us only to administer to them with Advantage.

Q. What makes it so difficult to perform this Duty successfully?

A. The natural Pride of Men, which makes them so averse from hearing of their own Faults with Patience; and the great distance there is between the Circumstances and Conditions of Men in this World; many being fit to be reprov'd, whom yet every Man is not fit to reprove. But in that Case we must get it done by those that are fit; and great regard must be had to Time and Circumstances, that this Exercise of Piety and Friendship may have its desired Effect. Tho' there are some Instances of Reproof, which the Meanest ought to practise towards the Greatest; never to approve of their Faults, nor to be influenced by them to any sinful Compliances.

Q. Whose particular Duty is it to reprove the Great?

A. 'Tis part of the Priest's Office, who is obliged to suit his Discourses to the Sins of his Hearers, as *St. John Baptist* did before *Herod*, *St. Paul* before *Felix*, and our *Saviour* before the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*.

Mark 6. 18.
Acts 24. 25.
Mat. 15. 3.

Q. But since Reproof is so difficult a Duty to be performed with success, to Equals as well as Superiors, what Measures ought to be observed in reprehending others?

A. The Occasion ought to be weighty and important; and we should take care that our Reproof be always free from Passion or Self-interest, lest any other Motive appear, besides that of doing good. It should be express'd in the most decent and softest Language, and timed when favourable Circumstances may concur to make it effectual. We ought to be entirely free
our

our selves from the Fault we reprehend in others, or at least at the same time we ought to condemn our selves, that by exposing our own Follies, we may with the better Grace rectifie those of others : We ought to mix due Praises with our Reproofs, that the Roughness of the one may be abated by the Emulation that is raised by the other. And lastly, we ought to skin over the Wound we have made, by applying the most comfortable Lenitive.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

A Lmighty God, by whose Providence thy Servant *John Baptist* was wonderfully born, and sent to prepare the Way of thy Son our Saviour, by preaching of Repentance; Make me so to follow his Doctrine and holy Life, that I may truly repent according to his Preaching, and after his Example constantly speak the Truth, boldly rebuke Vice, and patiently suffer for the Truth's sake, through the Merits of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

II.

O God, the Protector of all that trust in thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; increase and multiply upon me thy Mercy, that thou being my Ruler and Guide, I may so pass thro' things temporal that I finally lose not the things eternal: Grant this, O Heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ his sake. *Amen.*

III.

Almighty God, who hast sent me into this World as a state of Probation and Trial, that I might be a Candidate for Eternity; Teach me frequently to retire from the Occasions and Temptations to Sin, to mortifie my Affections to the Love of this World, that dangerous Enemy to my Salvation; as I have solemnly renounced it in my Baptism, so let my Practice shew I am true to what I then vowed: Make me carefully to avoid that Conversation where the Reputation of my Neighbour is sacrificed to the Entertainment of the Company; where Revenge is espoused as a Principle of Honour, and Honesty esteemed Weakness; where Pride and Vanity and sinful Pleasures chiefly reign; where Piety and Devotion insensibly lose their Strength and Vigour; where Religion is counted a Cheat, and Fools make a mock at Sin: Defend me, O God, from this Infectious Air, so apt to poison and corrupt the best Principles; where 'tis so difficult to preserve my Innocence, or to recover thy Favour by Repentance: Grant this, O Lord, for Jesus Christ his sake. *Amen.*

IV.

Most gracious God; thou great Lover of Souls, who hast made them after thine own Image, and purchased them at the Expence of the Blood of thy own Son Jesus Christ our Lord; inspire me with that true Christian Charity, which extends it self to the External Welfare of my Neighbour; that I may unfeignedly compassionate his Unhappiness whenever he transgresses thy holy Laws, and by all prudent means

means represent to him his Faults, with their several Aggravations; that I may carefully set his Miscarriages before his Face, and in such a true Light, that by a seasonable Warning of his Danger, he may be preserved from that Ruine his Sins deserve, and thy Justice has threatned. Let no Man's Greatness in this World ever prevail upon me to approve his Vices, or influence me to any the least sinful Compliance: And in order to make the Duty of Reproof effectual to the Salvation of my Neighbour, preserve me from any irregular Passion in the manner of administering it, and from any By-end in the prospect of performing it; that so by thy Blessing upon a seasonable and prudent Admonition, he may be recovered to a true Sense of his Duty, obtain thy gracious Pardon in this World, and in the next, Life Everlasting, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

C H A P. XXIII.

Saint Peter. June 29.

Q. *What Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?*

A. The Martyrdom of St. Peter, the first of the Apostles.

Q. *What Account have we of St. Peter's Original?*

A. That he was born at *Bethsaida*, a Town situated upon the Banks of the Sea of *Galilee*; John 1. 44 that when he was Circumcised according to the

Rites of the *Mosaick Law*, he was called *Symon* or *Symeon*; that our Saviour added to that
 John 1.42. the name of *Cephas*, which in *Syriack*, the vulgar Language of the *Jews* at that time, signifies a *Stone* or *Rock*; from thence it was derived into the Greek $\pi\epsilon\tau\rho\varsigma$, and so termed by us *Peter*.

Q. *What does our Lord seem to denote by this Name?*

Mat. 16. 18. A. The Firmness and Constancy of *St. Peter's* Faith, and his vigorous Activity in building up the Church.

Q. *What was his Profession before he was called to be an Apostle?*

Mat. 4. 18. A. He was a Fisherman, a Trade toilsome and laborious in it self, and bringing but small Advantage to those that were employed in it.

Q. *How came the first of the Apostles to be chosen from so mean a Profession?*

A. To manifest the great Power of God; in establishing Christianity, when such mean illiterate Persons were able to subdue the World to the Obedience of the Gospel. Besides, by the hardships of such an Education he was prepared to support those Difficulties which a persecuted state of Life might expose him to.

Q. *Was St. Peter elder than his Brother St. Andrew?*

A. 'Tis questioned among the Ancients. *Epiphanius* gives the Seniority to *St. Andrew*, and herein is followed by most of the Writers of the Church of *Rome*. But *St. Chrysostome*, *St. Jerome*, with many more, adjudge it to *St. Peter*, and for that Reason say he was *President* of the College of the *Apostles*.

Q. *Was St. Peter a Disciple of St. John Baptist?*

A. 'Tis

A. 'Tis thought probable, because his Brother St. Andrew certainly was; and upon the first News of Christ's appearing, St. Peter was very forward to converse with him, as if he had been awaken'd to expect the *Messias*.

Q. Who brought him first to our Saviour?

A. His Brother St. Andrew; who upon the Testimony received from St. John the Baptist, and his pointing to our Lord then passing by after his Baptism, follow'd our Saviour and brought the joyful News to St. Peter.

Q. What was the Occasion of his becoming our Saviour's Disciple?

A. The Miracle of the great Draught of Fishes, upon which he acknowledges his own Vileness, and was by our Saviour made a Fisher of Men, and commanded to follow him, which he immediately complied with; and from that time became one of our Saviour's constant and inseparable Disciples.

Q. What Preparation did our Saviour make in the Election of his Apostles?

A. He withdrew into a solitary Place, to address to Heaven for Success in that Affair of great Consequence.

Q. What may we learn from hence?

A. That all Christians should implore God Almighty's Guidance in Matters of great Importance. And that the Governours of the Church, so much inferior to our Saviour, should fast and pray earnestly for God's Direction, when they send forth Labourers into the Vineyard.

Q. Who were the most immediate Companions of our Saviour?

A. St. Peter and the two Sons of Zebedee, St. James and St. John, who were admitted more familiarly

familiarly than the rest of the Apostles unto all the most secret Passages of his Life; as is plain Mark 5.37. in the curing *Jairus's* Daughter, and at the Mat. 17. 1, *Transfiguration*.

2.

Q. *How did St. Peter behave himself, when several of the Disciples forsook our Saviour, upon a more perfect discovery of his Doctrine?*

A. He, with the rest of the Twelve, adhered to John 6.68. him with great Constancy and Resolution, professing they had no where else to go, because he had the *Words of eternal Life*; and upon this account he is by the Ancients stiled the *Mouth of the Apostles*, because so forward upon all Occasions to profess his Belief in our Saviour, and for which Reason he is by our Saviour himself Mat. 16. 17. pronounced *Blessed*.

Q. *Does it appear that our Saviour gave any personal Prerogative to St. Peter as Universal Pastor and Head of the Church?*

A. Tho' he is first placed among the Apostles, Mat. 10. 2. because, as most think, he was first called; and that his Age and Gravity qualified him for the Primacy of Order, without which no Society can be managed and maintained; yet it does not appear that he enjoyed any other particular Privilege; because in confessing Christ he spoke not only his own, but the sense of his Fellow-Apostles, and which *Nathaniel* profess as well as John 1.49. he; if he is stiled the *Rock*, all the Apostles are Mat. 16. 18. equally stiled *Foundations*, upon which the Wall Rev. 21. 14. of the new *Jerusalem* is erected; and the power Joh. 20. 23. of the *Keys* is promised to the rest of the Apostles as well as to St. Peter,

Q. *Why did St. Peter decline the great Honour of having his Feet wash'd by our Saviour?*

A. Out of great Modesty and a Sense of his Unwor-

Unworthiness; till understanding the Mystery of the Action, and the Advantage of it, he desired to be washed all over, rather than lose the Benefit of it.

Q. What may we learn from this Action of our Saviour?

A. Humility and Condescension, not to boggle at the meanest Offices of Kindness and Charity, when *God Incarnate* vouchsafed so much to abase himself.

Q. How did St. Peter behave himself upon the approach of our Saviour's Sufferings?

A. He was unwilling to think that one he loved so dearly should be so cruelly used; and betrayed too much Presumption and Self-confidence, not without some Reflexion upon the Weakness of his Brethren; *tho' all should* Mark 14. *forsake him*, yet he protested *he would not deny* 29. *him*. Add to this his unjustifiable Zeal in using the Sword without our Saviour's Order; for which he stands rebuked by our Saviour: And thus trusting too much to his own Strength, he became a great Example of Humane Frailty in denying his Master.

Q. How was St. Peter recovered from his Fall?

A. By our Saviour's gracious Look, whereby he called to mind what our Saviour had foretold. And by passionately bewailing his Folly, and the Aggravations of it; endeavouring by his penitential Tears to wash away his Guilt; and in this he is a Pattern for the Direction as well as the Comfort of all those that sincerely turn from the Evil of their Ways.

Q. Why did our Saviour so early appear to him after his Resurrection?

A. To

John 21.
15.

A. To encourage him under his great Sorrow for his late Fall; and to comfort him with fresh Assurances of his Favour; withal confirming him in the great Article of his *Resurrection*, requiring of him as a farther Proof of his Love, to *feed his Sheep*, faithfully to instruct and teach them, carefully to rule and guide them.

Q. *Why does our Saviour make three several Enquiries concerning St. Peter's Love to him?*

A. That St. Peter, who had been so defective in his former Professions, might be put in mind of his thrice denying our Saviour, and from the Sense of his Weakness be engaged to a better discharge of his Duty, and give more than ordinary assurance of his sincere Affection to his Master. Besides, this Question, *Lovest thou me?* Thus often repeated, fairly intimates, that as nothing but a mighty Love to our Saviour will support a Man under all the Difficulties and Dangers of the Pastoral Functions; so the best Testimony that can be given of sincere Affection in that great Office, is carefully to feed the Flock of Christ, and with Zeal to contribute towards the Salvation of Souls.

Q. *How did St. Peter behave himself after our Saviour's Ascension?*

A. In his first Sermon after the Descent of the Holy Ghost, he, with the rest of the Apostles, converted *three thousand Souls*; by justifying those *miraculous Gifts* the Apostles had received, and by preaching the *Resurrection* of that *Jesus* whom the *Jews* had crucified; and when the *Sanhedrim* would have obliged him to desist, with boldness and resolution he referred it to their own determination, whether it was not fit
4. 19. to obey God rather than Man.

Q. *How*

Q. How did he punish the Sacrilege of Ananias and Sapphira?

A. With present Death. They had consecrated some Lands unto God, and sold the same ^{Acts 5. 5.} to that purpose; and afterwards through Covetousness they purloined from the Price, and laid but part of the Sum at the Apostles Feet. The dreadful Punishment they suffered, should make all Men careful not to alienate what is consecrated to God; since what is so set apart, in a peculiar Propriety and Relation belongs to him, and the converting it to other uses is a robbing of God.

Q. Where was St. Peter's first Mission?

A. He was sent to visit those Christians ^{Philip 8. 17, 18.} the Deacon had converted in Samaria; where he confirmed the new Converts, and by Prayer and Imposition of Hands, communicated to them the Gift of the Holy Ghost; and severely rebuked Simon Magus for imagining that the Gift of God could be purchased with Money.

Q. How was St. Peter influenced to open the Door of Salvation to the Gentiles?

A. The Divine Goodness vouchsafed to remove those Prejudices of his Education which the Jews had entertain'd for several Ages against the Gentiles, by the means of a special Vision; which ^{Acts 10.} with the relation of what had happen'd to Cornelius, fully convinced him, that God was no Respector of Persons; that honest Heathens that exercised Works of Mercy and Devotion; were well disposed to receive the Christian Revelation, and should be accepted by him.

Q. How did he carry himself in the Dispute between the Jewish and Gentile Converts?

A. He declared God's Acceptance of the Gentiles,

tiles, which was communicated to him by a Vision from Heaven; and was farther confirmed by their receiving the *Holy Ghost* as well as others; and that therefore the Yoke of the *Jewish Rites* ought not to be laid upon the *Gentile Converts*. Yet afterwards he dissembled his *Christian Liberty*, by which he confirmed the *Judaizing Christians* in their Errors, and cast Scruples in the Minds of the *Gentiles*, for which he stands justly rebuked by St. Paul.

Gal. 2. 11.

Q. How was St. Peter preserved from the cruel Designs of Herod?

Acts 12.

A. God was pleased to hear the fervent Prayers of the Church that were offered in his behalf; for being put into Prison by the Command of *Herod*, and strictly guarded by Soldiers, and secured in Chains; the Night before his intended Execution, the *Angel of the Lord* came unto him, raised him from Sleep, knocked off his Chains, and conducted him into a place of Safety; so that he was delivered out of the Hand of *Herod*, who being provoked by the disappointment, commanded the Keepers to be put to Death.

Q. In what Places besides Judæa did St. Peter bestow his Apostolical Labours?

Euseb.
Hist. Eccl.
l. 3. c. 1.

A. At *Antioch* he employed himself in making Converts, and was the first *Bishop* of that place, according to the sense of Antiquity. He afterwards preached the Gospel to the *Jews* dispersed in *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, and *Asia*. Towards the latter end of his Life he went to *Rome*, about the second Year of the Emperor *Claudius*; where he laboured in establishing Christianity, chiefly among the *Jews*, being the Apostle of the *Circumcision*.

Q. What

Q. What was it that at that time so particularly prejudiced the Minds of the Romans against receiving the Doctrine of Christ?

A. The Arts of *Simon Magus*, who sought to advance his Reputation among the People, by doing many wonderful and strange things. And who used to stile himself the *first and chiefest Deity*, the *Father who is God over all*, and to whom *Justin Martyr* affirms a Statue to have been erected with this Inscription, *Simoni Deo Sancto*, To *Simon* the holy God.

Q. How did St. Peter expose the Impostures of this wicked Wretch?

A. By shewing the Vanity of his Pretences, and working himself those Wonders which *Simon Magus* falsely boasted of. For there being at *Rome* a Trial between them about raising a Kinsman of the Emperor's lately dead, the *Magician* failed in the Attempt, in which *St. Peter* succeeded. And when *Simon Magus* to recover his Reputation pretended to fly up to Heaven from the Mount of the *Capitol*, by the Prayers of *St. Peter*, the Wings he had made began to fail him; and falling he was so bruised that in a short time he died.

Q. When did St. Peter suffer Martyrdom?

A. About the Year of Christ *Sixty nine*, under *Nero*; whom he had provoked by his Success against *Simon Magus*, and by his reducing many dissolute Women to a temperate and sober Life; and it was probably in that Persecution of the Christians, when the Emperor burnt *Rome*, and charged them with the Guilt and Punishment of it. The manner of his Death was by *Crucifixion* with his Head downwards, affirming that he was unworthy to suffer in the same

same posture wherein his Lord had suffered before him.

Q. *What became of his Body?*

A. 'Tis said to have been embalmed by *Marcellinus* the Presbyter after the *Jewish* manner, and that it was then buried in the *Vatican* near the *Triumphal Way*, where there was a Church erected to his Memory, now one of the Wonders of the World for all the Advantages that Riches and Art can bestow.

Q. *Was St. Peter a married Man?*

Mat. 8. 14. A. The Scripture mentions his *Wife's Mother*, and he is reckon'd among the Ancients as one of the Apostles that was married and had Children. Moreover there is a Tradition that his Wife suffer'd *Martyrdom* in his Life time; and that he rejoiced she was called to so great an Honour; and in his Exhortations to her, 'tis recorded, he earnestly used these Words: *O Woman, be mindful of the Lord.*

Euseb. lib. 3. c. 30.

Q. *What Writings did this Apostle leave behind him?*

A. Only two *Epistles* that are genuine, and which make part of the *Sacred Canon*. They were addrest to those *Jewish* Converts that were scatter'd through *Pontus*, *Galatia*, &c. not only upon the Persecution raised at *Jerusalem*, but upon former Dispersions of the *Jews* into those places, upon several other occasions. The principal Design of the *first* is to comfort and confirm them under those *fiery Trials* and *manifold Temptations*, they were then subject to; and to direct and instruct them how to behave themselves in the several States and Relations both of the Civil and Christian Life; that they might not be engaged in those Rebellions against *Cæsar* and his

Acts 8. 1.

Ch. 4. 12.
Ch. 1. 6.

Ch. 2. 12,
to 23.

his Officers, then fomented among the *Jews*; Acts 3. 16, and that they might stop the Mouths of those 17, 18. who spoke against them as Evil-doers. In the second he prosecutes the same Subject to prevent their *Apostasie* from the Faith, their turning a- Ch. 2. 21. way from the Holy Commandment, and their falling from their own Stedfastness, by reason of Ch. 3. 17. any Persecution they were liable to. And moreover antidotes them against the corrupt Principles of the *Gnosticks*, who turned the Grace of God into *Lasciviousness*, and against those *Scoffers* at the Promise of *Christ's Coming*, as if it would never be verified.

Q. What may we learn from the Celebration of this Festival?

A. Humility and Modesty in acknowledging our own Vileness, and in submitting to the meanest Offices for the Relief of our Fellow Christians. That the Honesty of the Mind is of greater value in the sight of God, than the Strength of the Understanding. That weak Means may accomplish great Designs, when God thinks fit to give them his Blessing; which makes it reasonable we should always implore the Direction of Heaven. To be careful how we make Vows, but after we are engaged, to observe them inviolably, lest we be found to lye to the Holy Ghost. Never to alienate what is consecrated to holy Uses, lest we contract the great Guilt of robbing God. To bewail the Follies of our Lives with great sincerity, and to mourn bitterly for our Transgressions. To repair the breaches of our Duty by greater Zeal and Industry in God's Service, for the short uncertain part of Life that is yet remaining. To bear Reproof with Patience and Humility. To avoid all occasions

casions of Evil from a true sense of our own Weakness, and not to lay too great a stress upon our own Strength, lest we tempt God to humble our Pride by withdrawing his Grace. That we are never in greater Danger of being overcome by Temptations than when we suspect our own Hearts least.

Q. When may we be said to rely too much upon our own Strength?

A. When we neglect those Means of Grace, which are established in order to enable us to perform our Duty. When we rashly run ourselves into Temptations, presuming upon our own Ability to encounter them. And even in those Trials that the Providence of God brings upon us, when we trust more to our own Resolution than his Divine Assistance; and consequently remit that Watchfulness and Prayer which are so necessary to secure us. When we do not avoid those Occasions which by woful Experience we have found fatal to our Vertue. When we are not jealous over our own Hearts, and do not suspect that Weakness and Corruption which makes us so prone to be overcome when we are assaulted.

Q. What are the sad Effects of this Self-confident Temper?

A. It often betrays us to undertake what we have neither Capacity nor Ability to perform. It makes us neglect those previous Measures which are necessary to accomplish what we design. It teaches us by dear-bought Experience the Frailties and Infirmities of our own Natures. It frequently makes Shipwreck of a good Conscience, and provokes God to withdraw his Grace; which we lay so little stress upon, in order to our preservation.

Q. What

Q. What is necessary to Cure this sort of Presumption?

*A. To consider the Weakness and Frailty of humane Nature, and the frequent Instances of it in our own Conduct, and how unable we are of our selves to do any thing that is good. To reflect upon those eminent Examples that have been fatally betray'd by too great a Confidence in themselves; and which are set up, as so many Marks for us to avoid those Rocks upon which they split. That the praying not to be led into Temptation, supposes not only an obligation in us to avoid dangerous occasions, but also a proneness in our Nature to be overcome when we are attacked. That the Promises of God's Assistance imply we cannot work out our Salvation upon the Stock of our own Strength; and that the Means of Grace which are so necessary to secure us, shew that our *sufficiency is of God.**

THE PRAYERS.

I.

A Almighty God, who by thy Son Jesus Christ didst give to thy Apostle St. Peter many excellent Gifts, and commandest him earnestly to feed thy Flock; make I beseech thee, all Bishops and Pastors diligently to preach thy Holy Word, and the People obediently to follow the same, that they may receive the Crown of everlasting Glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

II.

O God, who never failest to help and govern them whom thou dost bring up in thy steadfast Fear and Love; keep me, I beseech thee, under the Protection of thy good Providence, and make me to have a perpetual Fear and Love of thy Holy Name, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

III.

Most merciful God, who desirest not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he should return and live; who hast graciously in thy holy Gospel provided for our Recovery, and encouraged our Repentance, by many Promises of Pardon and Forgiveness; fit and prepare me for this exercise of thy abundant Mercy, by true Sorrow and hearty Contrition, by condemning my past Follies, and by steadfastly purposing entirely to forsake them for the time to come: And then, O heavenly Father, for thine own infinite Mercies sake, whose Property it is to shew Compassion, for thy Truth and Promise sake, who art faithful and just, for the Merits and Sufferings of the Son of thy Love, in whom thou art well pleased, cleanse me from all my Iniquities, receive me into thy Favour, and let me continue therein all the Days of my Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

IV.

O God, who for the trial of my Faith and Obedience, hast suffered me while I am here below, to be surrounded with variety of Temptations; the Flesh designing to ruin me by
its

its false Allurements, the Devil by his Subtlety and Watchfulness; and the World by soliciting me in every State and Condition of Life to transgress thy Laws. How shall I, O Lord, a weak and frail Creature, stand fast when thy great Apostle failed in the Day of Tryal? My help standeth in the Name of the Lord who made Heaven and Earth; in the powerful Intercession of the Blessed Jesus our Advocate with the Father, in the comfortable Assistance of the Holy Spirit, by whom we are sealed to the Day of Redemption: Make me herein a Gainer, by my former Losses to be more sensible of my own Weakness and Inability, and of my necessary dependence upon thee my God; that being constantly upon my guard, and under the influence of thy Almighty Grace, neither the Pleasures of Life, nor the Fears of Death, may ever prevail upon me to quit the way of thy Commandments; but that being stedfast and immoveable, I may always abound in the Work of the Lord, knowing that my Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. *Amen.*

C H A P. XXIV.

Saint James. July 25:

Q. *What Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?*

A. That of St. *James* the Apostle, called the *Great.*

Q. *Why is this Apostle surnamed the Great?*

T 3

A. Either

A. Either because of his Age, being much elder than the other *St. James*; or for some peculiar Honours and Favours our Lord conferred upon him, he being one of the three Disciples which our Saviour admitted to the more intimate Transactions of his Life, from which the others were excluded.

Q. *What was St. James's Profession before he was called to the Apostolate?*

A. He was one of *Simon Peter's* Partners in Mat. 4. 21. the Trade of Fishing, and Son to *Zebedee* of the same Profession, who kept many Servants for that Employment, which speaks him a Man of considerable Note that way.

Q. *How had St. James the Honour of being related to our Saviour?*

A. By his Mother *Mary*, surnamed *Salome*, Sister to *Mary the Mother* of our Lord. Not her own Sister properly so called (the blessed Virgin being in all likelihood an only Daughter) but Cousin German, stiled her Sister, according to the Custom of the *Jews*, who were wont to call all such near Relations, *Brothers* and *Sisters*.

Q. *What may we learn from our Saviour's choosing his Disciples from such mean Professions?*

A. That God's Blessing usually meets Men in the way of an honest Diligence, and that we ought not to contemn Men of the meanest Employment, that are honest and industrious; especially when 'tis remembred, that our Lord him-
Luke 2. 51.
Mat. 13. 55. self, as is intimated in *Scripture*, and asserted generally by the *ancient Writers* of the Church, work'd at the Trade of a *Carpenter*, during the Retirements of his private Life.

Q. *How came St. James to be an Apostle?*

A. Our

A. Our Saviour passing by the Sea of Galilee Mat. 4. 21. saw him and his Brother in their Ship, and called them to be his Disciples; which they cheerfully complied with; and took no occasion to make Excuses from the Circumstances of their aged Father they left behind them.

Q. *What new Name did St. James receive from our Saviour?*

A. James the Son of Zebedee, and John his Mark 3. 17. Brother, he firnamed *Boanerges*, that is, *Sons of Thunder*.

Q. *What is probably intended by this Title?*

A. 'Tis easier to conjecture than determine. Some think it was upon the account of their rousing the sleepy World with the vehemency of their Preaching, as Thunder, which is called Psal. 104. 7. *God's Voice*, powerfully shakes the natural World. Or if it relates to the Doctrines they delivered, it may signifie their teaching the great Mysteries of the Gospel in a profounder strain than the rest; which is certainly verified in St. John, upon which account he is affirmed by the Ancients not so much to *speak as thunder*. Probably the Expression may denote no more, than that in general they were to be eminent Ministers under the Gospel-Dispensation, which is called *a Voice shaking the Heavens and the Earth*, and Heb. 12. 26. so answers the native importance of the word Hag. 2. 6. signifying an *Earthquake*, or a vehement Commotion that makes a Noise like Thunder.

Q. *Was there nothing in the Temper of these Apostles that might give occasion to this Title?*

A. Yes; the Instance of their desiring our Saviour, that they might pray down Fire from Heaven, as *Elias* did, upon the inhospitable Luke 9. 54. Samaritans that refused to receive him, shews

that the Name might have some respect to their fierce and furious Disposition.

Q. What was probably the Reason why the Samaritans refused our Saviour the common Accommodation of Travellers?

A. Because our Saviour seem'd to slight Mount Gerizim, the Solemn Place of their Worship; *his Face being as tho' he would go to Jerusalem.* Which different Places of Worship had created an inveterate Quarrel between the *Jews* and the *Samaritans*; the occasion whereof was this; that after the Tribe of *Judah* were returned from the Captivity of *Babylon*, and the Temple of *Jerusalem* was rebuilt; the *Jews* were by a solemn Covenant obliged to put away their *Heathen Wives*. But *Sanballat* Governour of *Samaria*, having married his Daughter to *Manasses* a *Jewish Priest*, who was unwilling to put away his Wife, excited the *Samaritans* to build a Temple upon Mount *Gerizim* near the City of *Samaria*, in opposition to the Temple at *Jerusalem*, and made his Son-in-Law *Manasses* Priest there; which laid the Foundation of that Fend between the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, which in process of time grew so great, that they would not so much as shew common Civility to one another.

Joseph.
Antiq. lib.
11. c. 8.

Q. How did our Saviour resent the furious Zeal of these Apostles?

Luke 9.
55, 56.

A. He severely rebukes the fierceness of their Temper as contrary to the nature of the Gospel Institution, and his Design of coming into the World; which was to save Mens Lives, by establishing a Religion, that not only consults their eternal Salvation, but their temporal Peace and Security.

Q. How

Q. How did our Saviour correct the Ambition of these two Apostles, in prompting their Mother Salome, to petition for the principal Places of Honour next his Person?

A. By making them sensible of the Rashness Mat. 20. 22, 23. *of their Demand; and that in his Kingdom, the highest Place would be to take the greatest Pains, and to undergo the heaviest Troubles and Sufferings; and that as for any Dignity, it was to be disposed of to those for whom it was prepared by the Father.*

Q. How does our Saviour calm the Passions of the rest of the Disciples offended at this Request?

A. By instructing them in the nature of his Kingdom, and shewing them how different it Mat. 20. 26. *was from that of worldly Potentates; that in his Service Humility was the way to Honour, and that he who took most Pains, and did most Good, would be the greatest Person; and that his own Example was a Pattern of it, who came into the World not to be served himself, but to serve others, even at the Expence of his own Life.*

Q. What became of St. James after our Saviour's Ascension?

A. The Spanish Writers contend that after he had preached the Gospel in Judaea and Samaria, he planted Christianity in Spain. But of this there is no Account earlier than the middle Ages of the Church; therefore 'tis safest to confine his Ministry to Judaea and the parts thereabouts.

Q. How did he suffer Martyrdom?

A. Herod being desirous upon his entrance in- Acts 12. 2. *to the Government to please the People, caused St. James to be apprehended at Jerusalem, and then commanded that he should be beheaded.*

And

And so he became the first Apostle that laid down his Life for the Testimony of *Jesus*.

Q. What happen'd as he was led to the Place of his Martyrdom?

Euseb. lib. 2. c. 9. *A.* His Accuser being inlightned by the Courage and Constancy *St. James* shew'd at his Trial, repented of what he had done, and falling at the Apostle's Feet, heartily begg'd his Pardon for what he had testified against him. The holy Man, after a little surprize, raised him up, and embracing him said, *Peace be to thee*. Whereupon he publickly profess'd himself a *Christian*, and was beheaded at the same time.

Q. Why do the Spaniards express so great a Veneration for this Apostle?

A. Because they do not only suppose that he planted Christianity in those parts, but that his Body after his Martyrdom at *Jerusalem*, was translated from thence to *Compostella in Galicia*, tho' the Account of both these Passages have little or no Foundation in History.

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. That God's Blessing attends those that depend upon his Providence, in a diligent and faithful Discharge of the Duties of their Calling. That we ought to quit all worldly Accommodations, and our Fathers House, rather than make Shipwreck of Faith and a good Conscience. That no difference of Religion, nor pretence of Zeal for God and Christ, can warrant and justify a passionate and fierce, a vindictive and exterminating Spirit. That we ought to treat all that differ from us with kindness and affability, and to shew our Moderation not by parting with our Principles, but by encreasing our Charity. That the

the great Honour of a Christian is to take pains in doing good; and that the highest pitch of his Preferment is to suffer for the Name of Christ, being most blessed when he is reviled and persecuted for his sake. That the Crown of Martyrdom exceeds all the Pomp and Splendour that attends Ecclesiastical Preferments.

Q. What do you mean by a Martyr?

A. One that bears Witness to the Truth at the Expence of his own Life. Those that suffered Imprisonment, the spoil of their Goods, and Banishment, and several other severe Torments, if they escaped without dying were called Confessors. But it was necessary to resist unto Blood, to acquire the glorious Privilege of a *Martyr*; tho' in a large sense they who died Heb. 12. 4. in Prison, or during their Sufferings by Want, or in their Banishment were killed by Thieves, or wild Beasts, and even those who administering to their Fellow Christians in the time of a Plague, lost their Lives, were called *Martyrs*, and entitled to the Privileges that were thought to belong to that State.

Q. What Privileges were assigned to Martyrs by the Primitive Christians?

A. That upon their Death they were immediately admitted to the *Beatifick Vision*; while other Souls waited for the Day of Judgment to compleat their Happiness. That God would grant chiefly to their Prayers the hastning of his Kingdom and the shortning the time of their Persecution. That they should have the greatest share in the Resurrection of the Just, which is called the *first Resurrection*, which was the more considerable, because the Primitive Christians look'd upon the end of the World as near at hand;

hand ; and many believed, that those who were Partakers of the first Resurrection should reign with Christ a thousand Years upon Earth. That the Martyrs and some other perfect Souls should receive no Hurt or Prejudice from the general Conflagration of the World ; when others less perfect should be purged by that universal Fire from the Dross they had contracted in Life. That Martyrdom supplied the Grace conveyed both by Baptism and the holy Eucharist, and entitled Men to the Benefit of those Sacraments, *viz.* Remission of Sins. The Martyrs had also a considerable hand in absolving Penitents, who thro' fear of suffering had lapsed into Idolatry, and in restoring them to the Communion of the Church.

Q. Wherein appears the Reasonableness and Happiness of chusing Martyrdom?

A. In that a Man prefers a future Good infinitely valuable in it self, and eternal as to its duration, before a present Satisfaction, which in its own Nature is mix'd and imperfect, as well as short and uncertain in respect of its continuance ;

Rom. 8. 18. *the sufferings of this present time being not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed.* Now this was always in the Account of the wisest Men esteemed a great piece of Prudence, to part with a little in present for a far greater future Advantage. Besides, God who hath a right in us both by Creation and Redemption, and thereby has power to dispose of us as he pleases, has declared he will not endure any Rival, and that we ought to be his without reserve. And the *Happiness* of *Martyrdom* consists in having an Opportunity to give the utmost Evidence of a sincere Love and fervent

Luke 14.
26, 27.

vent Affection to our great and mighty Benefactor; in being conform'd to the likeness of Christ's Sufferings, which were endured purely upon our Account; and in acquiring a Title to a degree of Glory superior to what other Saints shall be made Partakers of. Which made the blessed Martyr St. Ignatius profess that, *till the Sentence of Condemnation was passed upon him, he never began to be a true Disciple of Christ.* Rev. 7. 13;
14, &c.
Mat. 5. 10;
Epist. ad
Rom.

Q. How did the primitive Christians generally embrace Martyrdom?

A. With great readiness and chearfulness of Mind; with Comfort and Satisfaction, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for the Name of Christ. And not only the Clergy but the Laity, Women as well as Men, young and old, encountred Death with great Fortitude, tho' it was armed with all the variety of Torments that the Malice and Cruelty of their Enemies could invent.

Q. To what Causes may we attribute this great Courage and Resolution of the Primitive Christians?

A. Next to the plentiful Effusion of supernatural Grace upon such Occasions; the great Piety and Vertue of their Lives might be a proper Foundation for this Christian Confidence. They were not only Innocent but *extremely mortified*; they kept their Minds free from Guilt; and injured their Bodies to hardships and severe usage; and never softened themselves with the Pleasures and Diversions of the Age. They had a *lively Sense of the Rewards* of the next Life, with which the Sufferings of this are not to be compared. Their Minds were inflamed with great Love to their Lord and Master Jesus Christ; whose

whose *Blood* was yet warm, and whose Sufferings for their sakes were fresh in their Memories. Besides many of the Rich in times of Persecution reduced themselves to a *Voluntary Poverty*, distributing what they had among the Poor, that they might be in a readiness for *Martyrdom*. But the *wonderful manner* sometimes of bearing their Torments; as the *burning* of their *Bodies* without a *Shreek*, and their rejoycing in the midst of Flames, must be attributed to the wonderful Work of God, either in taking away the sense of Pain from the *Holy Martyrs* in the time of their Execution; or by giving them such a lively Sense and assured Prospect of their Reward, as made the most exquisite Torments supportable to them. And we may reasonably suppose when Women and Children despised the *Cross*, the *Rack*, and *wild Beasts*; that they were supported with particular Assistances from that good God, *who will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, or with the temptation will find a way for us to escape, that we may be able to bear it.*

1 Cor. 10.
13.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

GRant, O Merciful God, that as thy Holy Apostle St. *James* leaving his Father and all that he had without delay, was obedient unto the calling of thy Son Jesus Christ, and followed him; so I forsaking all worldly and carnal Affections, may be evermore ready to follow thy holy Commandments thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II. Al-

II.

Almighty God, who in thy wise Providence hast constituted several Ranks and Qualities of Men, that they might mutually assist to the support of each other. Teach me to be content with the Station wherein thou hast been pleased to place me, honestly and diligently to discharge the Duties of my Calling; without anxiety to depend upon thy Blessing for the Success of my lawful Endeavours. That however contemptible my Profession may be in the Eyes of Men, my Fidelity and Industry may be acceptable in thy Sight: That they may bring me in the return of a convenient Subsistence and Provision for my Family in this Life; and in the next the Reward thou hast promised to all that truly love and fear thee, thro' the Merits of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

III.

Gracious God, who by the Precepts of the Gospel, and by the Example of the blessed Jesus hast taught us the art of governing our Passions; Let not the specious pretence of Zeal for thy Service, betray me to any unreasonable Heats; but less to such Actions as thou hast forbidden: Let not any difference in Religion destroy in me that Charity which is a peculiar mark of thy Disciple; but teach me to compassionate those that are in Error, and to pity those Prejudices which have so unhappily misled them. Grant that with Meekness and Moderation, I may endeavour their Recovery, if peradventure God will give them Repentance to the Acknowledgment of the Truth: Make me ready to exercise
all

all acts of kindness to their Persons, and to implore thy Grace in their behalf, which is able to subdue the most inveterate Errors; that tho' they continue Enemies to thy Truth, I may never Sacrifice my Patience and Meekness; but by a continuance in well-doing wait for Glory, Honour, and Immortality, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

IV.

O Blessed Jesus, who for my sake didst endure the most painful and shameful Death of the Cross; let the sense of this mighty Love so constantly inflame my Soul, that, whenever thy Providence shall make it my Duty, I may readily and cheerfully embrace Death, tho' armed with the utmost Terror: Grant that I may rejoice in such a happy Occasion of testifying the sincerity and fervour of my Affection towards thee, of shewing that thou art the Delight of my Soul, that I not only prefer thee before all the Pleasures and Satisfactions of Life, but that the Torments and Pains of a violent Death are not able to separate me from thee. Inspire me with Courage and Resolution from above, that no Difficulties nor Dangers may affright me from thy Service, and that the apprehension of them may never transport me beyond the Bounds of Christian Decency and Moderation. *Whither shall I go? thou hast the Words of eternal Life.* Oh! Let the firm Belief of the immortal Joys and glorious Rewards thou hast prepared for those that suffer for thee, support me under all the Cruelties of the most merciless Persecutors. Let the Examples of thy Holy Martyrs, who *had trial of cruel Mockings and Scourgings, of Bonds and Imprisonments,*

sonments, who were stoned, who were sawn asunder, and slain with the Sword; of whom the World was not worthy, stir me up to Patience and Fortitude, that I may be a follower of them who thro' Faith and Patience inherited the Promises. Make me careful to do thy holy Will, that I may have Comfort and Joy in suffering for it. Grant this, O blessed Lord, who diedst for me, and rosest again, and now sittest at the right Hand of the Father to intercede for me, and all thy faithful Disciples. Amen.

C H A P. XXV.

St. Bartholomew. August 24.

Q. **W**hat Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?

A. That of St. Bartholomew the Apostle.

Q. Was he one of the twelve Apostles?

A. Yes; the Evangelical History is most express and clear as to that matter. But he being no farther taken notice of, than the bare mention of his Name, many both anciently and of latter times, have supposed that he lay concealed under the Name of Nathanael, one of the first Disciples that came to Christ. John 1. 47.

Q. Why are Nathanael and Bartholomew thought to be the same Person under two different Names?

A. Because as St. John never mentions Bartholomew in the number of the Apostles; so the other two Evangelists never take notice of Na-

U

thanael:

thanael: And as in St. *John*, *Philip* and *Nathanael* are joined together in their coming to Christ; so in the rest of the Evangelists *Philip* and *Bartholomew* are constantly put together; and afterwards we find them joint Companions in the Writings of the Church.

Q. What renders this Matter still more probable?

John 21.

1, 2.

A. That *Nathanael* is particularly reckon'd up with the other Apostles, to whom our Lord appeared at the Sea of *Tiberias* after his Resurrection, where there were together *Simon Peter*, *Thomas*, and *Nathanael* of *Cana in Galilee*, and the two Sons of *Zebedee*, and two other of his Disciples, who were probably *Andrew* and *Philip*.

Q. How does it appear, that by Disciples is here meant Apostles?

A. Partly from the Names of those that are reckon'd up; partly because 'tis said, that *this* was the third time that *Jesus* appeared to his Disciples: It being plain, that the two foregoing Appearances were made to none but the Apostles. Besides, if *Nathanael* had not been one of the twelve already, no tolerable Reason can be given, why he who was so eminently qualified, was not pitch'd upon to fill up the Place of *Judas*?

Q. What signifies the word Bartholomew?

A. It imports a relative Capacity, either as a Son or a Scholar, rather than a proper Name. As a Son, it denotes his being born of *Tholmai*: As a Scholar, it may relate to him as a Disciple of some particular Sect among the Jews; and among several other Institutions of that nature, some learned Men reckon the *Tholmeans* from *Tholmai*,

Tholmai, of which Order *Nathanael* seems to have been; and hence called *Bartholomew*, the Son or Scholar of the *Tholmeans*. And many of the Learned concur in the Opinion, that it is the same Person under two Names, the one proper, the other relative.

Q. What is the chief thing objected in this Matter?

A. What was anciently hinted by *St. Austin*, that 'tis not probable that our Saviour, who designed to confound the Wisdom of the World, by the Preaching of illiterate Men, would chuse *Nathanael*, a Doctor of the Law, to be one of his Disciples.

Q. How is this Objection answer'd?

A. That it equally lies against *St. Philip*, for whose Skill in the Law and the Prophets there is as much evidence in the History of the Gospel, as for that of *Nathanael*; and it may be still urged with greater Force against *St. Paul*, who was considerable not only for his Skill in the Jewish Law, but famous also for the Advantages of Humane Learning.

Q. What Character does our Saviour give of him, when Philip first brought him to our Lord?

A. That he was a Man of true Simplicity and Integrity; *an Israelite indeed, in whom was no Guile*; no Art of Hypocrisie and Deceit. John 1. 47.

Q. Wherein appears the Simplicity of his Mind?

A. In that when he was told of *Jesus*, he did not object against the Meanness of his Original, the low Condition of his Parents, the narrowness of their Fortunes; but only against the Place of his Birth, which could not be *Nazareth*, the Prophets having foretold he should be born at

John 1. 46. *Bethlehem*; and yet he was not so far carried away with this popular Prejudice, as not to enquire farther concerning our Saviour, and when
 v. 49. he was satisfied he was the *Messiah*, he presently owns him for such, calling him the *Son of God*, and the *King of Israel*.

Q. *Whither is it thought this Apostle travelled to propagate Christianity?*

A. As far as *India*, that part of it that lies next to *Asia*; for as *Eusebius* relates, when *Pantenus*, a Man famous for Philosophy as well as Christianity, desiring to imitate the *Apostolical* Zeal in propagating the Faith, travelled as far as *India* it self; there, among some that yet retained the Knowledge of Christ, he found
 Euseb. lib. 5. c. 10. St. *Matthew's* Gospel written in *Hebrew*; left there, as the Tradition was, by St. *Bartholomew*, one of the twelve Apostles, when he preached Christianity to those Nations.

Q. *What farther Account is there of him?*

A. That he returned from thence to the more Northern and Western parts of *Asia*, instructing the People of *Hierapolis* in the Doctrine of the Gospel; from thence he went into *Lycaonia*, where he employed himself upon the same account. And at last removed to *Albanople* in *Armenia the Great*; where endeavouring to reclaim the People from Idolatry, he was by the Governour of the Place put to Death.

Q. *How did he suffer Martyrdom?*

A. He was *Crucified*, some say, with his Head downwards; others, that he was flea'd, and his Skin first taken off; which might consist well enough with his Crucifixion, Excoriation being a Punishment in use not only in *Ægypt*, but among the *Persians*, next Neighbours to these *Armeni-*

ans,

ans, from whom they might easily borrow it. He cheerfully bore their cruel usage, and comforted and confirmed his Christian Converts to the last Minute of his Life.

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. That a Mind free from Prejudice is the best Preparative for the Reception of Truth. That the Nature of Faith doth not require such self-evident Arguments as force an Assent, but such as leave room for the Praise and Reward of believing. That true Zeal stops at no Difficulties, and is frightened by no Dangers, and parts with Life cheerfully when the Providence of God makes it our Duty. That Sincerity is absolutely necessary to make our Obedience acceptable to God, and our Conversation valuable among Men; Integrity of Mind being the highest Character and Commendation of a good Man.

Q. What is Sincerity, as it respects God?

A. It implies both the Reality of our Intention in God's Service, or our performing it truly for God's sake, as we pretend to do; and also the *uncorruptness* of it, or our performing it for his sake, more than any thing else whatsoever; and without any regard to any other Advantages of our own, but such as are allowed by God, and are subordinate under him. And the most certain Rule to examine our Sincerity by, is the *Integrity of our Obedience*. For he that obeys God in *all Times*, and in *all Instances*, cannot but serve him with both the Ingredients of Sincerity, viz. *Truth* and *Preheminence*.

Q. What is Sincerity, as it respects Man?

A. It implies a Simplicity of Mind and Manners in our Conversation and Carriage one to-

wards another. Not seriously to advance any thing contrary to the true Sense of our Minds, by our Words or Gestures. Not to pretend to greater Love and Kindness for our Neighbour than we really feel. In short, 'tis to speak as we think, to do what we pretend and profess, to perform what we promise, and really to be what we would seem and appear to be.

Q. What is the best Method to attain that Sincerity which is so necessary in God's Service?

*A. To consider that all our Religious Actions are of no value in the sight of God, except they are performed with a respect to his Authority, and out of Obedience to his holy Will; and that by designing other By-ends, as our own Profit, or the Praise of Men, we lose our Title to that Reward which he has promised. To possess our selves likewise with the Apprehension of God's Presence always with us; that *all our ways are before the Eyes of the Lord*, and that *he pondereth all our goings*. Which with devout Prayer for his Assistance, will keep us upright before him.*

THE PRAYERS.

I.

O Almighty and Everlasting God, who didst give to thy Apostle *Bartholomew*, Grace truly to believe and to preach thy Word; Grant, I beseech thee, unto thy Church, to love that Word which he believed, and both to preach and receive the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II. AL-

II.

Almighty and Everlasting God, Heavenly Father, I give thee humble Thanks, that thou hast vouchsafed to call me to the Knowledge of thy Grace and Faith in thee; increase this Knowledge, and confirm this Faith in me evermore. Give me thy Holy Spirit, that being born again, and made an Heir of Everlasting Salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, I may continue thy Servant, and attain thy Promises; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. *Amen.*

III.

O God, who art the great Searcher of Hearts, who dost not only require outward Acts of Duty, but the inward Disposition of the Mind! Teach me in all my Religious Actions to have an Eye to thy Authority; to obey thy Laws, because thou hast enjoined them; to make the sense of my Duty the prevailing Motive of my Piety, and not the Praise of Men, nor regard to temporal Advantages. Let me in all times, and in all places, have a respect to all thy Commandments, that no Privacy or Retirement may encourage me to offend thee, that no Losses nor Crosses may hinder me from doing or suffering thy blessed Will. Let not my Devotion be made, a pretext to cheat and defraud my Neighbour; neither let the exercise of Justice and Morality towards Men be a Plea for the neglect of my Duty towards thee. Let my Charity to the Poor never serve to cover my Intemperance; nor my Sobriety exempt me from feeding the Hungry,

and cloathing the Naked. Make my Life uniform, and of a piece, that the Duries of both Tables may take place in all my Actions, that my great design being thy Glory, I may through thy Infinite Mercy be accepted by thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

IV.

TEach me, O Lord, in all my Dealings and Intercourse with others, to exercise true Simplicity and Singleness of Heart; never to compass any Design by insidious Devices and false Appearances; not to betray my Neighbour by not performing what I have promised. Let me never abuse Men into a false Opinion of themselves, by representing them better than they are. Let my Tongue be the true Interpreter of my Mind, and my Expressions the lively Image of my Thoughts and Affections, and my outward Actions exactly agreeable to my Purposes and Intentions; that so when the Secrets of all Hearts shall be discovered at thy dreadful Tribunal, I may not be confounded, O blessed Jesus, with the Workers of Iniquity, who will not be able there to hide themselves. Grant this, O Lord, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

C H A P. XXVI.

St. Matthew. September 21,

Q. *What Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?*

A. That of *St. Matthew* the Apostle and Evangelist; who was also called *Levi*. Luke 5. 27.

Q. *What was his Extraction?*

A. Though a *Roman Officer*, yet was he a *Hebrew* of the *Hebrews*; both his Names discover him to be of *Jewish* Original, and probably a *Galilean*.

Q. *What was his Trade, or way of Life?*

A. That of a *Publican*, or *Toll-gatherer* to the *Romans*; an Office of bad report among the *Jews*. Mat. 10. 3.

Q. *How was the Office of a Publican esteemed among the Romans?*

A. It was once accounted a Place of Power and Credit, and of honourable Reputation, not ordinarily conferr'd upon any but *Roman Knights*; who being sent into the Provinces to gather the Taxes, employed under them the Natives of the Country, as Persons best skilled in their own Affairs.

Q. *What made this Office so odious to the Jews?*

A. The Covetousness and Exaction of those that managed it; for having farmed the Customs of the *Romans*, they griped the People, that they might be able to pay their Rent, and raise Profit to themselves; besides, this Tribute was not only a Grievance to their Purfes, but an Affront

front to the Freedom of their Nation, a standing Instance of their Slavery. And their Brother *Jews* exercising this Office, still provoked them more, because it obliged them to converse frequently with the *Gentiles*, which they held unlawful, and thereby they seemed to conspire with the *Romans*, to entail perpetual Slavery upon their own Nation.

Q. How did the Jewish Nation express their abhorrence of the Publicans?

A. By counting it unlawful to do them any Office of common Kindness. Money received of them might not be put to the rest of a Man's Estate, it being presumed to be got by Violence. They were not admitted as Persons fit to give Evidence in any Cause. They were not only deprived of all Communion in Divine Worship, but shunn'd in all Affairs of Civil Society, it being esteemed infamous and unlawful to marry into the Family of any such.

Q. In what did St. Matthew's Office more particularly consist?

A. In gathering the Customs of all Merchandize that came by the Sea of *Galilee*, and the Tribute that Passengers were to pay that went by Water, for which purpose the Office was kept by the Sea-side. And here it was that *Matthew* sat at the Receipt of Custom, when our Saviour called him to be a Disciple.

Mat. 9. 9.

Q. Is it probable he had any Knowledge of our Saviour before he was called?

A. Yes; living at *Capernaum*, the place of *Christ's* usual Residence, where his Miracles and Sermons were frequent, he might in some measure be prepared to receive the Impressions which our Saviour's Call made upon him.

Q. What

Q. What made St. Matthew's Compliance with our Saviour's Call so very valuable?

A. In that he exchanged rich and plentiful Circumstances, and a gainful Trade, for Poverty and Hardship; quitting whatever the World counts dear, and preferring the Attendance upon the *Son of Man*, who had not where to lay his Head, before all the Advantages of Interest and Relations.

Q. Wherein appeared his great Contempt of the World?

A. Not only in quitting a plentiful Estate in order to become our Saviour's Disciple, but in the great Abstemiousness he exercised in the remaining part of his Life; refusing to gratifie himself with the ordinary Conveniences, as well as with the Pleasures of it; his common Diet being nothing but *Herbs and Roots, Seeds and Berries.*

Q. How did he express his Satisfaction in becoming our Saviour's Disciple?

A. By entertaining our Saviour and his Disciples at a great Dinner at his own House, whither he invited all his Friends, especially those of his own Profession; piously hoping, that they also might be influenced by our Saviour's Converse and Company.

Q. What may we learn from our Saviour's Conversing so familiarly with the worst of Men, which gave such Offence to the Pharisees?

A. That the greatest Sinners are Objects of our Pity rather than Contempt; and that we ought not to grow faint in our Endeavours for their Conversion, as long as the wonderful Patience of God bears with them. That our Company is most suitable where the Necessities of
Souls

Souls do require it. And that in order to reclaim Sinners, we ought to prefer Acts of Mercy and Charity, before all Ritual Observances, and the nice Rules of Persons conversing with one another.

Q. Wherein appeared that Humility for which St. Matthew was remarkable?

A. In that when the other *Evangelists* describing the *Apostles* by Pairs, constantly place him before *St. Thomas*, he modestly places himself after him. And when the rest of the *Evangelists* record the Honour of his Apostleship under the Name of *Matthew*, but speak of his former sordid Course of Life, under that of *Levi*, he himself sets it down, with all its Circumstances, under his own proper and usual Name.

Q. Tho' St. Matthew continued with the rest of the Apostles till after our Lord's Ascension, what became of him then?

A. For the first *eight* Years he preached up and down *Judea*, endeavouring to convert his Brethren the *Jews* to the Faith of Christ. And when he betook himself to the propagating the Gospel among the *Gentiles*, *Æthiopia* is generally assigned as the Province of his *Apostolical* Ministry; where by Preaching and working Miracles he mightily triumph'd over Error and Idolatry. In which Country 'tis most probable he suffered *Martyrdom*, but by what kind of Death 'tis altogether uncertain.

Q. How was he qualified to write his Gospel?

A. By being an Eye-witness of the Life and Actions of our blessed Saviour, and by being free from those Temptations which prevail upon Men to impose upon others.

Q. When

Q. *When and upon what Account did St. Matthew write his Gospel?*

A. While he was in *Palestine*, about eight Years after the Death of our Saviour, at the intreaty of the *Jewish Converts*, and as *Epiphanius* tells us, at the Command of the Apostles. And being designed for the use of his Country-men, he writ it in the *Hebrew Language*, as is generally asserted by all Antiquity. It was very quickly translated into *Greek*, some attributing it to *St. John*, others to *St. James the Less*; the Apostles approved the Version, and the Church has received it as *Authentick*.

Irenæ. lib.
3. cap. 1.
Cyril. Hier.
catech. 14.
§. 8.
Euseb. lib.
3. c. 24, 39.
Lib. 6. c. 25.

Q. *What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?*

A. That there is Mercy for the worst of Sinners, if they forsake their evil Ways, and become obedient to that Call, which their own Consciences, and the Exhortations of God's Ministers so frequently sound in their Ears. That true Repentance consists in such a change of the Heart as produces such Actions as are agreeable to God, and avoids such whereby we have formerly offended him. That Poverty and Want are chearfully to be embraced when they lie in the way of our Duty. That it may be sometimes advisable to punish our past Extravagancies by forbearing the ordinary Conveniences and Accommodations of Life. That if we would enter into the true Spirit of this *Festival*, we should imitate that Humility, and Contempt of Riches, which was so remarkable in this blessed Apostle. That we should keep our Minds free from Covetousness, and raise them above the World, the most dangerous Enemy to our Salvation.

Q. *Wherein*

Q. *Wherein consists the Nature of Covetousness?*

A. In an immoderate craving, and love of Riches; which shews it self in an eager and unsatiable desire after the things of this World, tho' we employ no indirect means to obtain them; but is then compleat, when we use any unlawful and dishonest ways to grow Rich, and are anxious to acquire the good things of this Life, even tho' we neglect those which are infinitely more valuable. When we are sordid, and cannot find in our Hearts to enjoy what we possess; or if we do, spend it upon our Lusts, and never suffer those who are in want to share with us. When we make *Gold our Confidence*, and trust in it as our chief Happiness.

Q. *What are the mischievous Effects of this Vice, which our blessed Apottle entirely conquered?*

A. It alienates the Mind from God, and takes Men off from the Care of their Souls; we cannot *serve God and Mammom*. It obstructs all those Passages thro' which the Consideration of Religion should enter into our Thoughts. It is the Parent of most of the Fraud and Injustice, Cruelty and Oppression, Falshood and Perjury, that is committed in the World. It makes Men fail in the Hour of Temptation, so that when they should quit all for the sake of Religion they go away sorrowful, because they have great Possessions. It is very apt to blow us up with Pride, and to make us over-value our selves; and by the same Reason inclines us to despise and contemn those who want the same Advantages. It does but too frequently administer to Intemperance and unlawful Pleasures, and is made instrumental
in

Luke 16.
13.

in gratifying some irregular Passion that governs our Minds.

Q. Whence appears the Unreasonableness of this Vice?

A. In that 'tis an endless and insatiable Appetite, and consequently can never attain that Contentment and Satisfaction it proposes. Besides, it pursues Happiness by false Measures, for this do's not consist in abundance; and tho' the Luxury of Life is boundless, yet the Necessaries and Conveniencies of it lie within a small compass. Great Riches are so far from prolonging our Lives, that they rather shorten them, either by Labour and Care in getting them, by Anxiety and tormenting Cares in keeping them, or by Trouble and Vexation in losing them; they neither make us better nor wiser, but are dangerous to our Vertue, and tempt us to play the Fool. They cannot preserve us from Contempt or Misfortunes, from Diseases or Pains; they neither make our Friends more faithful, nor our Children more dutiful, neither can they afford us any Comfort, when we stand most in need of it, at the Hour of Death. But we must give a strict Account at the Day of Judgment, both how we have got them, and how we have used them.

Q. What is the best Means to overcome this Vice?

A. To employ our chief Care and Solitude about the things of the next Life, because Great in themselves, and of an eternal Duration. To put our Trust and Confidence in God, who has promised, if we seek his Kingdom, and the Righteousness thereof, all these things shall be added unto us. To be content with such things as we have, and to rely upon Providence by the use of just

just and lawful means, to increase them as he shall think fit. To consider the uncertainty of Riches, that they make themselves Wings and fly away; and that we can by no humane means secure the enjoyment of them. That if we could fix them, yet that Life is always upon the wing, and when we have heaped up Riches, we cannot
 Psal. 39. 6. tell *who shall gather them.* To be charitable in some measure to the proportion of what we have received, to be rich in good Works, and ready to distribute.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

O Almighty God, who by thy Blessed Son didst call *Matthew* from the *Receipt of Custom* to be an Apostle and Evangelist: Grant me Grace to forsake all covetous Desires, and inordinate Love of Riches, and to follow the same, thy Son Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, World without end. *Amen.*

II.

A Almighty and Everlasting God, give unto me the increase of Faith, Hope, and Charity; and that I may obtain that which thou dost promise, make me to love that which thou dost command, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

III.

A Almighty and most Gracious God, in all my Passage through this World, and my manifold Concerns in it, suffer not my Heart to be

too much set upon it. Let not my pursuit of temporal things rob me of that time which ought to be employ'd in the Concerns of my Soul, nor divert me from the serious Thoughts of the World to come. Let not the Cares of this Life, nor the Importunity of Business, make me neglect divine and spiritual Employments, nor disturb me in the performance of them. Make me charitable to those that are in Want, willing to distribute, and ready to communicate to the Necessities of my Brethren. Let me esteem no Loss comparable to that of Innocence, and of a good Conscience, nor harbour any Fear like that of thy Displeasure, and of the intolerable and eternal Pains of Hell-fire. Let thy Laws, O my God, direct all my Steps in my greatest Dangers; and make me more studious in all my Councils of what is lawful for me, than of what seems serviceable and advantageous to my worldly Circumstances. Let me never stoop to any Sin in hopes to advance or preserve those Riches which thy Bounty has bestowed upon me, that my Mind being purged from all covetous Affections, my great Care may be to provide for Eternity, and to lay up a Treasure in Heaven which faileth not: That when my Body shall tumble into Dust, my Soul may be received into those eternal Mansions of Glory, which thou hast prepared for all that love and fear thee, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

IV.

O Lord God, who resistest the proud and givest Grace to the humble; endue me with such Humility of Soul, and Modesty of Behaviour; that my looks may not be proud, nor my
X Thoughts

B^r. Taylor.

Thoughts arrogant, nor my Designs ambitious ; but that being restrained from all Vanity and Pride, and my Affections weaned from a great opinion and love of my self ; I may trust in thee, follow the Example of my blessed Master, and receive those Promises thou hast made in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

C H A P. XXVII.

St. Michael, and all Angels.
September 29.

Q. *What Festival does the Church this Day celebrate ?*

A. That of *St. Michael and all Angels.*

Q. *What Account have we from Scripture of St. Michael ?*

Dan. 10. 13. *A.* That he was an *Arch-angel*, that presided over the *Jewish Nation*, (stiled one of the *chief Princes*,) as other *Arch-angels* did over the *Gentile World*, as is evident of the Kingdom of *Persia*, and the Kingdom of *Greece*, from *Daniel*; that he had an Army of *Angels* under his
Rev. 12. 7. Command and Conduct, that he fought with the *Dragon*, or *Satan* and his *Angels*, and that
Jude 9. contending with the Devil, he disputed about the Body of *Moses*.

Q. *What does the Fight mentioned in the Revelation of St. Michael and his Angels, against the Dragon and his Angels, most probably signify ?*

Grot. Ham. *A.* Some great Authors refer it to the Contest that

that happen'd at Rome, between St. Peter and Simon Magus; when that Apostle by the efficacy of his Prayers entirely prevailed against the seducing Arts of that Magician. Others understand by it, those violent Persecutions the Primitive Church laboured under more or less for *Three* *Hundred* Years, and which happily ceased when the Powers of the World became Christian. It is generally agreed that it denotes some eminent Victory of the Christian Church, by the assistance of these ministring Spirits, over the Power and Malice of the Devil and his Instruments; who set themselves with all their might to persecute and destroy it.

Q. To what former Disputes does this Fight of the good and bad Angels seem to allude?

A. To the Expulsion of Lucifer, and the rebellious Angels from the Presence of God. It being very credible that God should make use of some of his heavenly Host to drive those from his blessed Mansions, who had made themselves the just Objects of his Wrath. And upon this Account it may be thought that the Prince of those Angels that fought against Satan, obtained the Name of Michael, which in the Hebrew signifies, *who is as God*; in that he suppressed the Arrogancy of Lucifer, who went about to make himself in some sense equal with God.

Q. What is supposed to be the Contest about the Body of Moses?

A. Some think the Controversie was about re-edifying the Temple, and restoring the Service of God among the Jews at Jerusalem; and that *Ham.* this in a figurative sense may as fitly be stiled the Body of Moses, as the Christian Church, or assembling of Christians for the Service of Christ,

Jude v. 9. is called the *Body of Christ*; and for proof of this is urged, that the passage of St. *Jude* is cited Chap. 3. from the Prophecy of *Zachariah*, where this matter is treated of. Others take the *Body of Moses* in a literal sense, and are of the Opinion that St. *Michael* by the Order of God hid the *Body of Moses* after his Death, and that the Devil endeavoured to discover it, as a fit means to entice the People to Idolatry by a superstitious Worship of his *Relicks*.

Q. *What is particularly observable in the manner of St. Michael's Contest with the Devil?*

A. That notwithstanding he might have said a great deal of Evil justly of him, yet he would not use any reproachful Words, any Bitterness or Execration against him, but said *the Lord rebuke thee*.

Q. *What should this teach us?*

A. It should make all Men, but especially those who are as *Angels of God* in the Church, ashamed and afraid, particularly in Controversies of Religion, to use Railing and injurious Reflections; since such opprobrious Language neither becomes the Nature of their Office nor their Character as Christians.

Q. *What is meant by the word Angel?*

A. In a general sense it signifies no more than a Messenger, or Embassador employ'd upon another's Errand; but in Scripture, and in common way of speaking, it is taken for a Celestial Spirit, a divine sort of Messenger made and employed by and under God.

Q. *What proof is there of the Existence of Angels?*

A. The general Consent and Tradition of Mankind concerning it, and their Ministry about

us ; confirmed by the clear and express Testimony of Scripture, which gives us an Account of their appearing to the *Patriarchs* and holy Men of old.

Q. *Are Angels pure Spirits?*

A. 'Tis the most current Opinion of the Christian Church, and seems most agreeable to Scripture, that *Angels* are pure Spirits, without any thing that is material and corporeal belonging to them ; but yet so that they have a Power to assume thin and airy Bodies. and can when they please appear in humane Shape, as they are frequently in Scripture said to have done.

Q. *Have not some kind of Bodies been attributed to Angels?*

A. Not only the ancient *Philosophers*, but some of the *Primitive Fathers*, were of this Opinion ; and they made them to consist of the purest and finest matter, which they call *Ætherial* ; grounding this Conjecture upon a pious belief, that it is the peculiar Excellency and Prerogative of the Divine Nature, to be a pure and simple Spirit, wholly separate from Matter.

Q. *What are the Properties of good Angels?*

A. They are said in Scripture to excel in Strength, to be endowed with great Knowledge Psal. 103. and Wisdom, to be eminent for Purity and Holiness ; whence the Title is given them of the Holy Angels. Besides, they are represented as full of Wings, to denote the great Activity and Swiftneſs of their Motions. And their Office consists in constantly attending upon the great and glorious King of Heaven and Earth, expecting his Commands, and ready to execute his Will.

Q. Wherein consists the Ministry of good Angels?

A. In declaring upon occasion the Mind and Will of Christ to his Church; for thus most of the Divine Messages were conveyed to the *Prophets*; and there are frequent Instances of it in the New Testament; as in the Case of *St. John Baptist's Birth*, the *blessed Virgin's* Conception, our *Saviour's Birth* and Resurrection. In guarding and defending us from outward Dangers, and from the Fury of evil Spirits; either by removing such evil Accidents from us, as in the course of necessary Causes must have befallen us; or by diverting the evil Intention of our Enemies against us; and sometimes by forewarning us of approaching Danger, by some external Sign or unaccountable Impression upon our Fancies. And when we are beset by evil Spirits, they either assist us in our Conflicts with them, or chase them away from us when we are no longer able to withstand them.

Q. What has been the general Opinion of Mankind about Guardian Angels?

A. There was a common Opinion among the *Heathens*, and a constant Tradition among the *Jews*, that every Man, at least every good Man, had a *Guardian Angel* appointed him by God, to take a special Care of him and his Concerns both Spiritual and Temporal; and we find the best Men among the *Jews* did at least believe the common Ministry of good Angels about good Men, and their more especial Care of particular Persons, upon particular and great Occasions, as is plain in *Abraham* and *David*. And this Tradition of the *Jews* seems to be confirmed and approved by our *Saviour*, in that Caution he gives

gives us, *Not to despise one of these little ones*; Mat. 18. 10. because in Heaven their Angels always behold the Face of his Father; and the first Christians seemed to be of the same Mind, when being told that Peter was at the Door, they said it was his Angel, thinking that he himself was fast in Prison; for which Saying there could be no Reason, had there not been a current Opinion among them of Guardian Angels: And their being sent forth to minister to them that shall be Heirs of Salvation, supposes them to be ready at hand to do all good Offices to good Men.

Q. *How are the good Angels farther employ'd about good Men?*

A. Being peculiarly present in the Publick Assemblies of God's Worship, they assist good Men in the discharge of their Religious Offices. And at the Hour of Death they stand by them in that great Conflict, and convey their separated Spirits into the Mansions of the Blessed, which is confirm'd by our Saviour, when he tells us upon Lazarus's Death, that he was carried by Angels into Abraham's bosom. Besides, at the Day of Judgment they shall be great Instruments of the Resurrection of their Bodies, and the Re-union of them to their Souls; as our blessed Saviour declares in St. Matthew.

Q. *Wherein doth the Ministry of bad Angels consist?*

A. In trying and exercising the Righteous, as was the Case of Job, and the Church of Smyrna; in punishing the Wicked, as was the Case of Saul and Ahab; and in executing Vengeance on them in another World. They set themselves in Opposition to the Glory of God, and the Salvation of Mankind, tho' they are restrained in the Exercise

cise of their Power ; beyond which they cannot exert it without divine Permission.

Q. If good Angels are appointed by God to be ministering Spirits, and are so ready to help us, ought we not to worship them.

A. We may reasonably conclude from the Nature of their Employment, that we ought not to worship them, since they minister to us ; and in this seems to lye the Force of the Angel's Reasoning in the *Revelations*, where he forbids *St. John to worship him because he was his Fellow-Servant*. Besides, it is severely reprov'd by *Col. 2. 18. St. Paul, let no Man deceive you in a voluntary Humility, and worshipping of Angels, not holding the head*. The Scripture directing us to the Mediation only of one Mediator between God and Man, *viz. the Man Christ Jesus*.

Q. Why do we celebrate this Festival ?

A. To express our Thankfulness to God for those many eminent Advantages that the *Christian Church* has obtained, by the Ministry of the *Holy Angels*, over the Power and Malice of the *Devil*, and those mischievous Instruments he has employ'd to destroy it.

Q. What Instructions does the Fidelity and Zeal of St. Michael offer to the Governours of the Church ; who are as Angels of God ?

A. That it is not enough to discharge their Duty by living well themselves ; but that besides the Care of their own Conduct, they are obliged to watch over the Conduct of others : And with Boldness and Courage to oppose all profane Contemners of Religion, those Rebels that are at defiance with God, be their Quality and Power never so great and terrible.

Q. What

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. To adore the Wisdom and Goodness of God, in appointing such excellent and glorious Beings to minister to our Salvation; and to be thankful to him for the invisible Aid and Protection we receive from them. To comfort our selves against the Vigilancy and Power of the Devil, with the assured assistance of *good Angels*, who are as powerful and forward to do us good, as the others are malicious and busie to do us mischief. To behave our selves with great Gravity and Reverence in the Publick Worship of God, because those excellent Beings attend to observe our outward Carriage and Deportment. To imitate their example in serving God, with the same Readiness and Diligence, with the same Chearfulness and Zeal that they do in Heaven. To condescend to the meanest Services for the good of others; especially with all our might to help forward the Salvation of our Neighbour. Never to despise any good Man, be his Circumstances never so mean, because he is dear to God, and under the peculiar Care of the *Holy Angels*. To secure their Ministry to our selves, by continuing sound and holy Members of the *Catholick Church*, who are the declared *Heirs of Salvation*.

Q. What may all Christians learn from the Behaviour of St. Michael?

A. To avoid the scandalous and unchristian Practice of *Evil-speaking*, the Seed of all Evil, and the Pest of Civil Society, which we are so apt to fall into, and yet find it so hard to repent of, by Reason of the Difficulty of making such Reparations as are necessary upon such occasions.

Q. Where-

Q. Wherein consists the Nature of Evil speaking ?

A. In divulging any Ill we hear or know concerning our Neighbour, whether true or false, whereby his good Name is impaired by our Words or Actions. For a motion of the Head or Hand, a smile or cast of the Eye, is capable of tarnishing the brightest Reputation; nay, even Silence it self, if it appears affected and mysterious, shall be as effectual to that purpose as the most envenomed *Satyr*. If the Matters we object against him are false, or doubtful and uncertain, 'tis Calumny or Slander; if the Evidence we proceed upon be not sufficient, 'tis *rash Judgment*; and a proneness to blame and condemn others, is *Censoriousness*.

Q. But may we not speak that Evil of our Neighbour, which we know certainly to be true ?

A. I think, except some Instance of *Justice* or *Charity* require it, we ought not to expose our Neighbour's real Faults; because we are not willing that all that is true of our selves should be exposed to publick view; and 'tis contrary to that Love we owe to our Neighbour, which should make us ready to cover and conceal all things that are defective in him, and which, if known, may tend to lessen that good Name and Reputation he has in the World.

Q. How is this Vice condemn'd in Scripture ?

A. The Scriptures place it in the company of the worst of wicked Actions. *Mat. 15. 19.* Out of the Heart, says our Saviour, proceed evil Thoughts, Murders, Adulteries, false Witness, evil Speakings. *Rom. 1. 29.* St. Paul ranks Backbiters with the black Crimes of those who are given up to a reprobate Mind, and which in the Judgment of God are worthy of

of Death; and the same *Apostle* puts *Slanders* and *Revilers* with those that shall not inherit the Kingdom of God; and when he reckons up the Sins of the last Times, *Evil-speakers* are in the List of that black Catalogue. *St. Peter* joyns *Evil-speakings* with *Malice*, *Hypocrisie* and *Envy*, Off-springs of Hell, which we must lay aside entirely, if we desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that we may grow thereby: And notwithstanding the highest Pre-
tences to Religion, *St. James* assures us, that he who bridleth not his Tongue, that Man's Religion is vain. 1 Cor. 6. 10.
2 Tim. 3.
2, 3.
1 Pet. 2. 1.
Jam. 1. 26.

Q. Wherein appears the heinousness of this Vice?

A. In that it robs our Neighbour of one of the most valuable things in the World, which is often purchased at the hazard of his Life, his Reputation and good Name, in the Judgment of Solomon, better than precious Ointment. In that 'tis contrary to that wise Dictate of Nature, of doing to others, as we would they should do to us; and is an open Violation of that Christian Doctrine of Charity so dear to our Saviour, by which he distinguished his Disciples, and which was to remain as the true Character of the Children of God. It is the Sign of a weak Mind, that is not able to bear the Lustre of Merit and Vertue; the Mark of a mean and cruel Temper, unworthy of a Man, to delight in wounding our Neighbour, or to widen those Wounds others have made. Eccles. 7. 1.

Q. What are those Disguises in which this Vice too often appears?

A. Sometimes it puts on the Appearance of Friendship, and is usher'd in with great Commendations,

dations, that the Wound that is given may be sure and deep. Sometimes it counterfeits the Shape of Zeal for God's Glory: It pretends to be Love of Justice, and a compassionate Sense of the Faults of our Neighbour, or a violent and just Sorrow caused by that Outrage that is done to God. But, whatever false Reasons may be given for this Practice, 'tis always a Breach of the great Duty of Charity, and 'tis a Mark of false Devotion, to tear in pieces the Reputation of those that oppose our Designs, and to think to make an agreeable Offering to God of what we sacrifice, either to our Revenge, or to our Jealousie.

Q. How should we behave our selves when we hear our Neighbour ill spoken of?

A. We should endeavour to divert such Discourse, and discourage such sort of Conversation by all prudent Methods. We should urge what we can in our Neighbour's Vindication, and upon this occasion cite the Examples of such innocent Persons as have been oppressed with Calumny. We should discover the Contradiction and Impossibility of what is advanced to defame him, if the matter will admit of it. We may appeal to his past Actions; and to the ill Reports concerning him, oppose all the good that is otherways known of him, to weaken the Detraction, and to take off the Credit of it. If the matter is too evident to be denied, we may endeavour to diminish the Guilt of it, by imputing it to Ignorance or Surprize, or to the Strength of Temptation, and by owning that the best People might have found Difficulties in such dangerous Circumstances. But by no means must we shew any Pleasure or Satisfaction in
what

what is related to our Neighbour's Prejudice, lest we encourage the *Detraitor*, and become Partakers with him in his Guilt.

Q. How may we conquer this epidemical Vice, so injurious to our Salvation?

A. By mortifying those irregular Passions from whence this unchristian Practice does proceed; as our *Pride*, which falsely persuades us that we exalt our selves by debasing others; our *Envy*, which makes us look upon the Happiness of others with an evil Eye, and provokes us to disturb it; our *Malice* and *Revenge*, which prompts us to injurious Resentments; our *impertinent Curiosity*, which is always meddling with what does not belong to us. But nothing is more necessary in order to master this reigning Sin, than a firm Resolution never to speak the least ill of any one; for whoever gives himself the Liberty to publish the evil he knows of another, tho' never so inconsiderable, whoever talks with Pleasure of such Faults, tho' known by every Body, may be likely to fall into real Defamations. For 'tis difficult to stop, where the Power and Corruption of Nature is strong; besides, by indulging small Neglects we fortifie our evil Inclinations, and by degrees contract a Habit of *Detraction*.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

O Everlasting God, who hast ordained and constituted the Services of Angels and Men in a wonderful Order; mercifully grant, that as thy Holy Angels always do thee Service in Heaven, so by thy Appointment they may succour

cour and defend me on Earth, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

Almighty God, who seeft that we have no Power of our felves to help our felves, keep me both outwardly in my Body, and inwardly in my Soul; that I may be defended from all Adverfities which may happen to the Body, and from all evil Thoughts which may assault and hurt the Soul, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

III.

IT is very meet, right, and my bounden Duty, that I fhould at all Times, and in all Places, give Thanks unto thee, O Lord, Almighty and Everlafting God. Becaufe thou haft in all Ages defended thy holy Spoufe the Church, from the fiery Assaults of all her Enemies; from the Fraud and Malice of Hereticks and deceitful Men; from the crafty Infnuations of all them that work Vanity; from the Cruelty and Barbarity of thofe who have openly fought her Defttruction; and from the Treachery and Perfidiousnefs of thofe who have pretended Kindnefs, in order to ruine her with greater Advantage. Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the Company of Heaven, I laud and magnifie thy Glorious Name, evermore praifing thee, and faying, Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Hofts, Heaven and Earth are full of thy Glory; Glory be to thee, O Lord, moft High. *Amen.*

IV. Blessed

IV.

BLessed God, whose Throne is incircled with Myriads of glorious Spirits, who veil their Faces as not being able to behold the Brightness of thy Majesty, and who delight in their attendance upon those Ministries whereunto thou hast appointed them. I thy unworthy Creature prostrate my self in all Humility at thy Foot-stool, beseeching thee to give me Grace to do thy Will on Earth with the same Diligence and Industry, with the same Zeal and Chearfulness, as thy blessed Angels do it in Heaven; that imitating their exemplary Obedience, constant Devotion, profound Humility, unspotted Purity, and extensive Charity, I may engage their Protection in all my Necessities; and may particularly enjoy the Advantage of their Assistance in my last Hour, in that dismal Conflict with Death and the Powers of Darkness; and being by them conducted to the Mansions of Glory, may be advanced to a more intimate and happy Society with them in the Life to come, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

V.

SEt a Guard, O Lord, upon my Lips, that I offend not with my Tongue. Let Prudence and Circumspection always attend to shut out such Discourses as border the least upon Evil-speaking. That I may be tender of the Reputation of my Neighbour, and never diminish his good Name by spreading any evil Reports concerning him: That the Deformity of his Body, and the Weakness of his Mind may never be the subject of my light Mirth. That I may never encourage

encourage Backbiters, by listning to their Suggestions, and by giving credit to their Slanders. Thou hast given me a Tongue that I might Praise thee, and that I might influence others to bless thy holy Name. Oh! let this be the main Employment of that noble Gift, that my words may chiefly aim at promoting thy Glory; either to soften the Pains of the afflicted; to vindicate the Reputation of my Neighbour, whenever I hear it injured, to unite the Minds of those that are at Variance, or to instruct those that know thee not enough; and to entertain all the World, O God, with thy Greatness, and thy Goodness, to inflame all Hearts with thy Love, to provoke them to praise thee, to bless thee, to glorify thee; that I may one Day mingle my Praises with those of thy Elect in Glory, thro' Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

C H A P. XXVIII.

St. Luke the Evangelist. Oct. 18.

Q. *What Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?*

A. *That of St. Luke the Evangelist?*

Q. *What mean you by an Evangelist?*

A. *The Name was at first given to those that preached the Gospel; but afterwards it was confined to those Four, that writ the History of the Life and preaching of our Saviour Jesus Christ, whose four Gospels make part of the sacred Canon of Scripture.*

Q. *Where*

Q. *Where was the Place of St. Luke's Nativity?*

A. *Antiach*, the Metropolis of Syria, pleasant Euseb. lib. for its Situation, fertile for its Soil, rich by its 3. c. 4. Traffick, famous for Learning and Civility; and above all, renowned for this one peculiar Honour; that here it was that the Disciples of Jesus were first called Christians.

Acts 11. 26.

Q. *What was his particular Profession?*

A. That of *Physick*; an Art in those Days generally managed by Persons of no better Rank than Servants; which made *Grotius* conceive, Grot. that St. Luke, tho' a Syrian by Birth, was a Ser- Secun. vant at Rome, where he sometimes practised Phy- Luc. sicks, and when made free, returned into his own Country.

Q. *What other Skill was he famous for, besides Physick?*

A. *Painting*; and there are some Pieces still in being, pretended to have been drawn by his own Hand; but I believe 'twill be somewhat difficult to prove them true Originals of our Evangelist.

Q. *Was St. Luke one of the Seventy Disciples?*

A. Some of the Ancients thought he was, and that he deserted our Saviour upon the unwelcome Discourse he made to his Disciples; but John 6. was afterwards recalled by St. Paul. And upon no better ground it is said, he was one of the two Disciples going to *Emmaus*; for besides the silence of Scripture, St. Luke seems to contradict it himself, by confessing he was not from the beginning an Eye-witness and Minister of Luke 1. 2. the Word. Most probable it is he was converted by St. Paul during his abode at *Antiach*.

Y

Q. *How*

Q. How did he bestow his Labours after his Conversion?

A. He became an inseparable Companion and Fellow-labourer of *S. Paul* in the Ministry of the Gospel; especially after *St. Paul's* going into *Macedonia*; from which time, in recording *St. Paul's* Travels, *St. Luke* always speaks of himself in his own Person.

Q. How did he endear himself to St. Paul?

A. By attending him in all his Dangers; by being present with him in his several Arraignments at *Jerusalem*; by accompanying him in his hazardous Voyage to *Rome*; where he served his Necessities, and supplied those ministerial Offices, which the Apostle's Confinement would not suffer him to discharge; especially in carrying Messages to those Churches where he had planted Christianity; and in sticking to him when others forsook him.

2 Tim. 4.
11.

Q. Where did St. Luke preach the Gospel?

A. Some say he left *St. Paul* at *Rome*, and returned back into the *East*, and travelled into *Egypt*, and the parts of *Lybia*, where he converted many to Christianity, and took upon himself the *Episcopal* Charge of the City of *Thebais*, though 'tis most probable he did not wholly leave *St. Paul*, till he finished his Course with Martyrdom.

Q. What Account do others give of his Labours?

A. That he first preached in *Dalmatia* and *Galatia*, then in *Italy* and *Macedonia*; where he spared no Pains, declined no Dangers in the faithful discharge of the Trust committed to him.

Q. About what Time, and in what Manner did he die?

A. The

A. The *Ancients* are not very well agreed about either : Some affirming him to die in *Egypt*, others in *Greece*, some in *Bithynia*, others at *Ephesus*, some make him die a natural, others a violent Death.

Q. What Account is given of his Martyrdom?

A. That he successfully preached the Gospel in *Greece*, till a party of Infidels making head against him, drew him to Execution, and for want of a Cross whereon to dispatch him, presently hang'd him upon an Olive-Tree, in the *Eightieth* Year of his Age; though *St. Jerome* makes it the *Eighty Fourth*.

Q. Where is his Body interred?

A. At *Constantinople*, whither it was removed by the command of *Constantine*, or his Son *Constantius*, and buried in the great Church built in Memory of the Apostles.

Q. What Writings did he leave behind him?

A. His Gospel and his History of the Acts of the Apostles, both dedicated to *Theophilus*?

Q. Who was this Theophilus?

A. Many of the *Ancients* supposed it to be a feigned Name, denoting no more than a Lover of God, a Title common to every Christian; tho' others with better Reason conclude it, the proper Name of a particular Person; especially since the Title of *most Excellent* is attributed to him, the usual Form of Address in those Times to great Men. We may probably suppose him to have been some *Magistrate*, whom *St. Luke* had converted; to whom he dedicates these Books, not only as a Testimony of Respect, but as a means of giving him farther Assurance of those things wherein he had been instructed. Luke 1. 4.

Q. What may we learn from the manner of these Dedications?

A. That in Addresses of this Nature, though Authors should not neglect the giving those Titles that are due to Mens different Qualities, (as *most Excellent* seems to be given by *St. Luke* upon that Account, it being the same Word in the Original, *St. Paul* applies to the Roman Governors *Felix* and *Festus*) yet they should be very sparing in personal Commendations, for fear of contracting the Guilt of *Flattery*, so pernicious to themselves, as well as their Patrons.

Q. When was St. Luke's Gospel supposed to be writ?

A. During his Travels with *St. Paul* in *Achaia*, whose Help he is generally said to have made use of in the composing it. And that this the Apostle primarily intends, when he so often speaks of *his Gospel*. Besides this Advantage, we are assured by the *Evangelist* himself, that he derived his Intelligence from those *who from the beginning had been Eye-witnesses and Ministers of the Word*.

Q. Upon what Occasion did he write his Gospel?

A. Partly to prevent those false and fabulous Relations, which even then began to be obtruded upon the World; and partly to supply what seemed wanting in those two *Evangelists* that wrote before him, in relation to some Particulars concerning our *Saviour's* Birth, Preaching and Miracles. He mainly insists upon what belongs to *Christ's Priestly Office*, upon which account the *Ancients* in accommodating the Four Symbolical Representments in the *Prophet's Vision* to the Four *Evangelists*, assigned the Ox or Calf to *St. Luke*.

Q. When

Q. When was his History of the Acts of the Apostles writ ?

A. 'Tis generally agreed, that it was writ at Rome, at the end of St. Paul's two Years Imprisonment, which makes the Conclusion of it. In this History he relates not only the Actions but the Sufferings of some of the chief Apostles, especially of St. Paul, of whose Carriage and most intimate Transactions St. Luke was best able to give a true Account, having been his constant Attendant.

Q. What is observed of St. Luke's Stile and manner of Writing ?

A. That it was clear and perspicuous, polite and elegant, exact and accurate ; which shews how great a share he had in the native Genius of Antioch, the Place of his Birth. He compleated the Character of a true Historian, being faithful in his Relations, and elegant in his Writings.

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival ?

A. To rejoyce in those glad Tidings, which this Evangelist published to the World ; and not only attentively and reverently to read his Gospel, but to practise, as he did, that Doctrine which he taught. To be careful to avoid all Flattery in our Addresses to great Men, which is contrary to that Truth and Sincerity, that is so essential to the Character of a good Christian. To be exact and faithful in all our Relations of Matters of Fact, without favouring Parties and Factions. To stick close to the Professors of Religion, when they are encompassed with variety of Persecutions ; which is an Effect of true Charity, since Friendship only to Persons

in Power and Plenty, may be suspected of Self-interest.

Q. What Duties do Christians owe to their Fellow-members, when they are persecuted for Righteousness sake?

A. To visit them in their Afflictions, and by seasonable Advice to encourage them to persevere in the Faith. To pray to God for them, that he would be pleased to support them under all their Trials with the Assistance and Comfort of his Holy Spirit. To vindicate them from the false Aspersions of wicked and malicious Men. According to our Abilities to administer to their Necessities; and by our Interest with others, to procure them that Relief, which our own narrow Circumstances cannot supply them with.

Q. Whence arises our Obligation to these Duties?

A. From that Love and Zeal we ought to have for Religion; whose Destruction is sought for, by those who oppress the Professors of it. From that spiritual Union there is among Christians under their Head Christ Jesus. So that if
1 Cor. 12. 6. one Member suffer, all the Members suffer with it. From the Example of our Saviour, who,
2 Cor. 8. 9. out of his great Grace and Kindness, being rich for our sakes became poor; emptied himself of his Glory, that we through his Poverty might be made Partakers of spiritual and durable Riches. From that Charity we owe to all that are in want, especially to those that are of the Household of Faith. And from the Sense of being liable our selves to the same Distress; and therefore,
Heb. 13. 3. remembering them that suffer Adversity, as being our selves also in the Body.

The

The PRAYERS.

I.

Almighty God, who calledst *Luke* the Physician, whose Praise is in the Gospel, to be an Evangelist and Physician of Souls; may it please thee, that by the wholesome Medicines of the Doctrine deliver'd by him, all the Diseases of my Soul may be healed, thro' the Merits of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

O Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly Wills and Affections of sinful Men; grant that I may love the things which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise; that so among the sundry and manifold Changes of this World, my Heart may surely there be fixed, where true Joys are to be found, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

III.

I Yield thee hearty Thanks, most merciful Father, for those glad Tidings of Salvation, thy Evangelist St. *Luke* has published to the World; for all the Manifestations of thy holy Will; and of that inestimable Redemption thou hast graciously condescended to work out for us; and for that thou hast been pleased to regenerate us by thy holy Spirit, to receive us for thy own Children by Adoption, and to incorporate us into thy holy Church: And I humbly beseech thee, to grant, that I being dead unto Sin, and living unto Righteousness, and being buried
Y 4 with

with Christ in his Death, may crucifie the old Man, and utterly abolish the whole Body of Sin; and that as I am made Partaker of the Death of thy Son, I may also be Partaker of his Resurrection: So that finally with the residue of thy holy Church, I may be an Inheriter of thine Everlasting Kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

IV.

M^r Kettle-
well.

O Righteous Lord, who tryest thy People with heavy Sufferings for thy Truth and Righteousness sake: Give me the Heart constantly to own thy Ways, and those who suffer for them. Oh! that whenever I see a *Member* of thine *suffering*, as a good Fellow-member, I may *suffer with it*. That I may be among those *who grieve for the Afflictions of Joseph*; and come in to bear a share of their Adversity, who are enduring Afflictions for thee; and *remember those who are in Bonds, as bound with them*. Let me not be ashamed of the *Testimony of the Lord*, nor of any of those that are his *Prisoners*; but rejoyce to make my self a Companion of such as are bearing Tribulations for his Truths, and be glad when I can minister to their Necessities. and relieve the same. When they are *Sick* and in *Prison*, give me the Heart to visit them; when they are *Strangers* and in *want*, make me ready to assist them with Supplies fitting for their Circumstances. And Oh! that I may look upon such Services, as the most blessed Opportunities of shewing my Love unto thee, O blessed Jesus! knowing that thus to communicate is *accepted by thee, as done to thy self*; and that by having a Fellowship with thy

thy Saints in their Sufferings, I may have a Fellowship with them in that Blessedness, where-with thou, O Father, wilt crown both the Sufferers and their Partakers in the end; through the Merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

C H A P. XXIX.

St. Simon and St. Jude. Oct. 28.

Q. **W**hat Festival does the Church celebrate this Day?

A. That of St. *Simon* and St. *Jude* the Apostles.

Q. Why was St. *Simon* called the Cananite?

A. This *Sirname* has given occasion to several Conjectures. Some say he was so called from *Cana*, a Town in *Galilee*, and for that reason they will have him born there. But St. *Luke* Luke 6. 15. calling him *Simon Zelotes*, or the *Zealot*, plainly shews, that the word *Cananite* descends from *Hiero.* in the *Hebrew*, which signifies to be *zealous*, and Mat. c. 10. denotes his hot and sprightly Temper.

Q. Upon what other Account is he thought to have been called the *Zealot*?

A. Either because before his Conversion, he was one of the Sect of the *Zealots*; or as some, who keep still to the same sense of his Name, because after his Conversion he shewed great Zeal for the *Christian Faith*, and a pious Indignation against those who professed Religion with their Mouths, but dishonoured it by their vicious Lives.

Q. What

Q. What was the Sect of the Zealots?

A. It began in *Mattathias*, the Root of the *Maccabean* Family, and was continued among the *Jews* till our Saviour's time. They look'd upon *Phineas* as their Patron, who in a mighty Zeal for the Honour of God, did immediate Execution upon *Zimri* and *Cosbi*. They took upon them a Power of executing the Law upon Offenders, without any formal Trial and Accusation. And that not only by Connivance, but with the Leave both of the Rulers and the People. Under this Pretence, their Zeal afterwards degenerated into Licentiousness and Extravagance, and they became the occasion of great Miseries to their own Nation, as is largely related by *Josephus*.

Numb. 25.
7.

De Bel.
Jud. lib. 4.

Q. What Account is there of St. Simon after our Lord's Passion?

A. He continued with the other Apostles and Disciples of Christ at *Jerusalem*, joyning in Worship and Communion with them; and did not leave that City till after the Feast of *Pentecost*, when they were all furnish'd with the necessary Gifts of the *Holy Ghost*, in order to the Exercise of their Ministry in all parts of the World.

Q. Where is it thought St. Simon planted Christianity, and suffered Martyrdom?

A. Some say he went into *Aegypt*, *Cyrene* and *Africa*, and there preached the Gospel; and after some time, from thence into *Lybia* and *Mauritania* for the same purpose. He is said also to have passed into *Britain*, where after having converted many to the Faith, and suffered many Persecutions, he was crucified by the Infidels, and there buried. Others, in their

Mar-

Martyrologies affirm, that the Idolatrous Priests put him to Death at *Suanir*, a City of *Persia*, tho' where this City stood in *Persia* our Histories mention not.

Q. *What Account have we of St. Jude ?*

A. That as to his Descent and Parentage, he was of our Lord's Kindred, being Brother to *James the Less*, and stiled himself *Brother of Jesus Christ*. It is not certain when he was called to be an Apostle, nothing appearing of him till we find him in that Catalogue. But from that time he became a constant Attendant upon Christ's Person and Ministry ; which was a probable Evidence, that he was eminent for his Zeal in the Christian Faith.

Q. *In what Sense was he Brother of our Lord ?*

A. Some of the Ancients would have it understood to be a Cousin German, tho' the greatest part of them, make him, and them that were stiled *Brethren of our Lord*, Children of *Joseph* by a former Wife.

Q. *By what Name is St. Jude described ?*

A. By two besides *Jude*, *Thaddeus* and *Lebbeus*. It being usual for the same Person in holy Writ to have more Proper Names than one. These Names were given him partly to distinguish him from *Judas* the Traitor, and partly as a Commendation of his Wisdom and Zeal. *Lebbeus*, according to *St. Jerome*, denoting *Prudence* and *Understanding*, and *Thaddeus* signifying a *Person zealous in praising God*.

Q. *What is particularly recorded of St. Jude at our Lord's last Supper ?*

A. That upon our Saviour's having told his Disciples what particular Manifestations he would

would make of himself after his Resurrection to his sincere Followers, St. Jude asked him what
 Joh. 14. 22. was the reason he would *manifest himself to them, and not to the World*; which seems to hint at some expectation of our Saviour's temporal Grandeur.

Q. How does our Saviour answer St. Jude's Inquiry?

A. That because the World had no respect for him and his Doctrine, therefore they should
 Joh. 14. 23. not enjoy the Happiness of his Presence; but since they who had been his constant Disciples had shewed their Love to him by obeying his Laws, and attending upon his Person, he would make them the comfortable Returns of his Love, by revealing himself to them.

Q. What may we learn from this?

A. That after the Resurrection of our Saviour, his Appearances were necessary to be made to the Apostles, because they were to be the Witnesses of his Resurrection to the World; but not to his Enemies, who had rejected him and his Doctrine. That good Men, Persons of Godlike Tempers and Dispositions, Religious Observers of God's Laws, are qualified to be admitted to particular Acts of God's Grace and Favour.

Q. What Province was allotted to St. Jude for the Exercise of his Ministry?

A. 'Tis most probable that he preached in Judaea, Galilee, and from thence went through Samaria into Idumea, and to the Cities of Arabia, and neighbouring Countries, yea to Syria and Mesopotamia.

Q. Where did he suffer Martyrdom?

A. By the general Consent of the Writers of
 the

the *Latin Church*, he is said to have travelled into *Persia*, where after great Success in the Labours of his Ministry, he was, for his free and open reproving the *superstitious Rites* of the *Magi*, cruelly put to Death.

Q. *What Account have we of his Family?*

A. That he was a marry'd Man, and that his two Grand-Children bore Evidence to the Truth of Christianity before *Domitian* the Emperor; who being jealous of any Corrivall in the Empire, summoned them before him, as some of the Remains of the Posterity of *David*, and of those that were related to Christ.

Q. *How did they escape when they appeared before the Emperor?*

A. They were dismissed without any severe usage; for answering with great Sincerity, and owning themselves of the Race of *David*, but that they were very poor, and lived by Husbandry, as was manifest by the hardness of their Hands; and that as to the *Messiah*, though he was a King, yet 'twas in *Heaven*, not on Earth, where his Kingdom should not appear till the end of the World, when he should come in Glory to judge both the Quick and Dead; *Domitian* despised their Poverty and Meanness, as below his Jealousies and Fears.

Q. *What Writings did this Apostle leave behind him?*

A. He left but one *Epistle*, inscribed at large to all *Christians*; but 'tis thought to have been chiefly intended for the converted *Jews* in their several Dispersions. He exhorts them to stand manfully upon the defence of the Faith once *Jude 3.* delivered to the Saints, and to oppose the false Teachers, the *Nicolaitans*, and the *Gnosticks*, who

who laboured so much to corrupt it. But because true Christian Charity, tho' zealous, is without Bitterness and Hatred, he exhorts all Christians by all gentle means to save them; and to pull them out of the Fire, into which their own Folly had cast them.

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. To be content that our best Actions should be known to God only, since there remains so little remembrance of many eminent Apostles. That our Labours in doing good should rather appear by the happy Effects of them, than by any Publication from our selves or others. That to court the applause of Men is Vanity; and that nothing is worth our care more than to approve our selves to that Almighty Being that cannot be imposed upon. That in all our Undertakings we ought to be diligent and faithful in the discharge of our own Duty, and leave the Success quietly to the All-wise Disposer of all things. That Men of great Piety and Vertue are chiefly prepared to receive particular Acts of God's Grace and Favour. That Zeal ought to be applied, in the first place, to the most solid and substantial parts of Religion; but that upon all occasions it ought to be govern'd by Christian Measures in the manner of its acting.

Q. Wherein consists the Nature of Zeal?

A. It is an earnest concernment for or against some thing, and a violent pursuit and prosecution of it; and is in its own Nature indifferent, like the rest of the Passions, but good or bad, according to the object and degree of it. And after this manner 'tis used in the holy Scriptures; in a good sense when applied to those things where-

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in the Honour of God and the Salvation of Mens Souls are concerned; as when St. Paul tells the *Corinthians* that their Zeal had provoked very many; and that Christ gave himself for us to purifie to himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works. And that he was zealous of the *Corinthians* with a godly Zeal: But in a bad sense when applied to a furious Spirit of Persecution, and to such Contentions and Divisions as produce Wrath and ungovernable Passions. Thus 'tis said the *Jews* were filled with Zeal and spake against those things that were spoken by St. Paul, contradicting and blaspheming; and that the *Jews* that believed, moved with Zeal, set all the City in an uproar; the Works of the Flesh are manifest, Hatred, Variance, Zeal, &c. &c. a Zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

Q. What is necessary to qualifie our Zeal, that it may become a Christian Vertue?

A. That it be right in respect of its Object, that what we contend for be certainly and considerably good; and that what we oppose be certainly and considerably evil. That the measure and degree of it, be proportion'd to the good or evil of things about which it is conversant. And that it be always pursued and prosecuted by lawful and warrantable means; since no Zeal for God and his Glory, for his true Church and Religion, will justify the doing of that which is morally and in itself evil.

Q. When does our Zeal become criminal?

A. When we violently contend for any Doctrine that is erroneous, and are more earnestly concerned for the Externals of Religion, and the Instruments of Piety, than for solid and substantial

Pfal. 106.
32, 33.

Exod. 32.
19.

rial Goodness which they are design'd to work in us; when it betrays us to the breach of any of God's Laws, in order to promote his Glory; and creates Divisions and Schisms in the Church of Christ. And when we prosecute even Truth it self without that Meekness and Charity which are essential to the Character of a true Christian; and we have the more reason to take care how we govern our Zeal, because that *Moses* himself, eminent for *his Meekness*, when zealous for God, at the *Waters of Meribah*, was so provoked, that he spake unadvisedly with his Lips; so that if our Zeal for God be not well tempered, we may with that *great Prophet*, break the *Tables of the Law*, and throw them out of our Hands, with Zeal to have them preserved.

Q. What Considerations are proper to excite our Zeal in the Service of God?

Tit. 2. 14.

A. The Excellency of the Divine Nature, and the infinite Bounty and Goodness of God towards us. The wonderful Condescension of the Son of God, who stooped so low to redeem us, and suffered so much to purifie to himself a peculiar People *zealous of good Works*. The great Importance of working out our Salvation, and the necessity of striving, if we will enter in at the strait Gate. That it is true Wisdom, to employ our chief Concern upon things that are most valuable; and that, such is the weakness of our Nature, and the strength of Temptations, that without constant Application of Mind, we shall never be able to attain them. That if we be stedfast, unmoveable and always abounding in the Work of the Lord, our Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Q. How

Q. *How far does Zeal for God, extenuate and mitigate the Immorality of any Action?*

A. Wicked things done out of true Zeal for God, are damnable without Repentance, because the Nature of wicked Actions is not altered by our Persuasion concerning them; tho' it may be some allay to the fault of the Person, and may render him more capable of the Mercy of God by Repentance, than if he had done contrary to his Conscience, and the clear Convictions of his own Mind. For it is a much greater fault to do that which we really believe contrary to our Duty, than ignorantly to transgress when we are under the Power of an *erroneous Conscience*. The first argues we have a *Will* to do *Evil*, the other shews our *Practice* to be agreeable to our *Judgment*, and tho' we break God's Law, yet it is with a sincere Intention to serve him.

Q. *How ought we to express our Zeal towards Hereticks and Schismaticks?*

A. By earnest *Prayer* to God, for their *Conversion*, that he would bring into the way of Truth, all such as have erred, and are deceived. By shewing such *Kindness* to their *Persons* as may dispose them to receive the Impression of those Arguments that we should offer with *meekness* for their recovery. By *abstaining* from all reproachful and bitter *Reflections*, which prejudice them against the Truth. By *exercising* all Acts of *Charity* towards them, which is the only *moderation* due to those that dissent from us, without impairing our own Principles by a misunderstood *Complaisance*; for tho' St. Ignatius St. Ignat. Epist. ad. Ephes. p. 23. advises us to be their Brethren in kindness and gentleness, yet not to imitate their ways, but to be Followers of the Lord, and to their Errors

to oppose Firmness in the Faith. But when they lie under the *Censures* of the Church, we should keep at a distance from their *Conversation*, which is but reasonable, that when all Methods have been used for their recovery, we may be careful to avoid any *Infection* our selves. As for great *Corporal Punishments* and Infliction of *Death* upon these Accounts; they appear to me contrary to the *Genius* of the *Christian Religion*, and inconsistent with many of the chief Principles of it. For the Gospel of our Saviour engages us to shew Meekness to all Men, and universal Love and Good-will even to our Enemies; from whence it must follow, that no difference of Religion, no pretence of Zeal for God can justify a fierce vindictive and exterminating Spirit.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

O Almighty God, who hast built thy Church upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head Corner-stone; Grant that all Christians may be so joined together in Unity of Spirit by their Doctrine; that they may be made an holy Temple acceptable unto thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

Lord of all Power and Might, who art the Author and Giver of all Good Things; graft in my Heart the Love of thy Name, increase in me true Religion, nourish me with all Goodness, and of thy great Mercy keep me

me in the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

III.

GRacious God, who hast endowed me with an immortal Soul; grant that I may apply my most serious Thoughts to work out my own Salvation with Fear and Trembling. Enlighten my Understanding, that I may see the wondrous things of thy Law; rectifie my Will, that I may follow the plain Rules of Good and Evil; and in all my Actions, fix my Heart entirely upon thy Glory. Let my devout Prayers be offered in Retirements, where thine All-seeing Eye only enters. Let my Works of Mercy and Charity be often unknown even to those that receive the Benefit of them. Make me to consider that the Praise of Men is but as Smoak which vanishes away, and that thy Favour only is better than Life and endureth for ever. Teach me heartily to strive that I may enter in at the strait Gate, to fight the good Fight of Faith, and to destroy the whole Body of Sin. Grant I may be always upon my guard against my potent and malicious Enemies; and that the short time I have to work, may make me careful to improve it to the best purposes, and the uncertainty of all things here below, may call off my Mind from the Objects of secular Happiness; that applying my self entirely to Devotion and Charity, Justice and Sobriety, I may be prepared in the Temper and Disposition of my Mind, for that Happiness which thou hast promised; through the Merits of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

IV.

A Almighty God who art the first and chiefest Good ; engage all the Powers and Faculties of my Soul to love and delight in thee ; and to place all affiance, trust, and confidence in thee. Teach me to proportion my Zeal to the value of things, that I may love thee, the Lord my God, with all my Heart, with all my Soul, and with all my Strength ; and in the first place seek the Kingdom of Heaven. Let my Zeal have a respect to all thy Commandments, that it may never degenerate into Hypocrisie and Faction ; but that I may always pursue it by just and proper means, and may never think to promote thy Honour and the Safety of thy Church, by ways offensive to thee, and which thou hast forbid. Let not a good end prevail upon me to overlook any unlawful means that may advance it, but that trusting in thy Providence, and depending upon thy care of our most Holy Faith, I may never start from the way of my Duty, in all those Methods I shall at any time pursue, in order to preserve it. Grant this, O Lord, for Jesus Christ his sake. *Amen.*

C H A P. XXX.

All Saints. November 1.

Q. *What Festival does the Church celebrate this Day ?*

A. *That of All Saints.*

Q. *What*

Q. What do you mean by a Saint?

A. In the beginning of Christianity, the word *Saint* was applied to all *Believers*, as is plain by the use *St. Paul* and *St. Luke* make of it: *Acts* 9. 13 Afterwards none were called so but such as eminently excelled in all *Christian Vertues*; and *Rom.* 16. tho' that Sense still continues in the *Church Militant*, yet it now generally signifies such *good Men*, as (whose earthly *Tabernacle* being dissolved) have a *House not made with Hands, eternal* *2 Cor.* 5. 1. in the *Heavens*, and so are become a part of the *Church Triumphant*.

Q. What Persons may be denominated Saints in the Church Militant?

A. Such who not only believe the *Doctrines* of the *Christian Religion*, but conform their whole *Lives* to the *Precepts* of it: Such who not only have a *holy Faith*, but are purified thereby. Who have a sincere regard to *God* and another *World* in all their *Actions*, and are constant and uniform in the discharge of their *Duty*; who abstain from all kind of *Evil*, *perfecting Holiness* *1 Cor.* 1. 7. in the *fear of God*.

Q. What seems to be the design of the Church in instituting this Festival?

A. To honour *God* in his *Saints*. It being thro' the *Assistance* of his *Grace* that they were made conformable to his *Will* in this *Life*, and thro' the *Bounty* of the same *gracious Lord*, that his *free Gifts* are crowned with *Happiness* in the other.

Q. What farther End does the Church aim at?

A. To encourage us here below to run the *Race* that is set before us with *Patience*, seeing we are encompassed with so great a *Cloud of Wit.* *Heb.* 12. 1.

nesses. To work in us *Firmness* and *Resolution* of Mind, by propounding the *Examples* and *Patterns* of *holy Men* gone before us, who in their respective *Ages* have given remarkable *Testimony* of their *Faith* in God, and constant adherence to his *Truth*.

Q. By what means did the Saints in Heaven attain that Happiness they now enjoy?

A. 'Twas purchased for them by the *Death* and *Sacrifice* of our Saviour *Jesus Christ*; the Benefits whereof they were made capable of receiving, by the *purity* of their *Faith*, by the *un-corruptness* of their *Morals*, by their *Constancy* and *Perseverance* in despite of all *Sufferings* and *Persecutions*, and by fighting manfully under *Christ's Banner* to their *Lives end*.

Q. How is the Pattern of the Saints accommodated to our Imitation?

A. In that they were meer Men, cloathed with *Flesh* and *Blood*, and an imperfect Nature, liable to *Sin*, as well as we; and once strove with the same *unruly Passions*, and were exposed to the same *Difficulties* as we are now surrounded with; and that we have the same *holy Precepts* to direct us, the same *Grace* to assist us, the same *Promises* to encourage us, the same *Sacraments* for our spiritual Nourishment. So that what was attainable by them, may be acquired by us, if we are not wanting to our selves.

Q. What Obligations lie upon all Christians to Holiness of Life?

A. They are obliged to it by the *Precepts* of the *Gospel*, which strictly command *Holiness*; by the *Promises*, which are so many *Encouragements* to a *holy Life*; by the *Threatnings*, which
are

are so many powerful Arguments against Sin; add to this the Engagements of the *Baptismal Vow*, made in their Infancy, and which they since took upon themselves in *Confirmation*, and have frequently renewed at the *Lord's Table*.

Q. What do you mean by the Communion of Saints?

A. That the *Saints* have in common one God, one Christ, one Spirit, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one Hope; and that they communicate with one another in all Duties of Piety and Charity; by mutual Help and Assistance in times of Persecution, by mutual Beneficence and Liberality in time of Want, and by mutual Participation of one anothers Prayers.

Q. What Communion have the Saints here below with the Saints above?

A. Those upon Earth are call'd *Fellow-Citizens* Eph. 2. 19. *with the Saints, and of the Household of God, of 3. 15. the same Family with those in Heaven.* We bless God for them, rejoyce at their Bliss, give Thanks for their Labours of Love, and pray that with them we may be Partakers of the heavenly Kingdom. They pray for us, for our Consummation and Bliss, rejoyce at our Conversion; but what farther the Saints in Heaven do particularly in relation to us, or what we ought to perform in reference to them, is not revealed in Scripture, nor can be concluded from any Principle of Christianity?

Q. What Duties result from the Belief of this Article of our Creed?

A. To walk in the *Light*, as God is in the Light; there being no Communion with his holy Nature without *Sanctity*. Humbly and cheerfully to acknowledge so great a Benefit. To express

press an *ardent Affection* to those *Saints* which live, and a *reverent Respect* to those which are now with *God*. And particularly to direct and enlarge our *Charity* to those who are of the *Household of Faith*.

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Festival?

A. The *Wisdom* and *Happiness* of being religious. That Heaven deserves the utmost we can do or suffer to obtain it. That thro' many *Tribulations* we must enter into the Kingdom of *God*. That we ought to Honour the *Saints* by commemorating their *Piety*, congratulating their *Victories* over the *World*, and rejoicing in their *Glory*; but chiefly by propounding their *Example* for our *Imitation*; to learn of them to be humble and meek, and to submit all our *Desires* to the *Will of God*; to govern our *Senses* by *Reason*, and our *Reason* by the *Dictates of Revelation*; to take up the *Cross*, and resist unto *Blood*, striving against *Sin*; that by living as the *Saints* once did, we may at length inherit those *Promises*, which they by their *Faith* and *Patience* in this *World*, now inherit in the next.

Q. Wherein consists the Advantage of propounding the Examples of the blessed Saints for our Imitation?

A. It convinces us of the *possibility* of performing our *Duty*, by shewing us *Men* cloathed with *Flesh and Blood*, that have practised it; and so is apt to cure that *Sloth* and *Despondency*, which the weakness of our *Nature* is apt to suggest to us. It gives us sensible *Evidences* of the *happy Fruits* of a pious *Life*, which make greater *Impressions* than those *Consequences*

sequences which Reason draws for our Conviction ; and hereby disposes us vigorously to imitate those Vertues which shined in them with so great a lustre.

Q. If Examples at so great a distance have such a Power ; ought we not to exercise great care, in reference to what Company we daily converse with ?

A. Solomon has long since observed, that he Prov. 13.
20.
that walketh with wise Men shall be wise ; but that the Companion of Fools shall be destroyed : which sufficiently denotes, that if we design any Progress in Piety and Vertue, *that Wisdom* which Solomon recommends, we must frequent those who are eminent Examples of it ; and avoid as much as is possible such Fools who *make a mock at Sin.* And this Method is common to Mankind in all other Cases ; when they aim at *Perfection* in any particular *Skill* or part of *Learning*, they covet the Conversation of those that are known to *excel* that way. 14. 9.

Q. Is it possible in the general Converse of the World to avoid bad Company ?

A. It is very difficult for those whose Business and Circumstances carry them into a great deal of Company, always to avoid that which is bad ; and Charity sometimes may oblige good Men to converse with such in order to their Reformation, where there are any probable hopes of making bad Men better ; but however it is very much in every Man's Power to chuse what sort of Company he designs for his Diversion and Entertainment ; a matter of such importance, that it requires most serious Consideration.

Q. What

Q. *What ought a Man to consider chiefly in the Choice of his Company?*

A. He ought chiefly to fix upon such as have Vertuous and *Christian Principles*; and who endeavour to shew the *Effects* of them, in their *Lives* and *Conversations*; for as Men of no *Principles* are very much unqualified for Friendship, because they have no Foundation to support it; so Men that act contrary to their good Principles, give but a *scurvy Proof* of their *Sincerity*. Besides, Men *sceptically* inclined may endanger the *firmness* of our *Faith*, as wicked Men may the *strength* of our *Vertue*.

Q. *What other Rules may be observed in the Choice of our Company?*

A. When we have secured the main point, and fenced against the greatest Danger of Conversation; we ought to have a peculiar regard to the *Temper* and *Disposition* of those we pitch upon, for our constant Companions; for if they have a great deal of *Passion*, and a little share of *Sense*, our Freedom and Friendship will expose us to vexatious Difficulties. Tho' we are never so much upon our Guard, a great deal of Fire will sometimes heat us; we may be *provoked*, and then we are the worse for such Company. After these Cautions, I think the Advantages of *Learning* and *Wisdom*, of *Quickness* and *Vivacity*, may justly challenge a regard, since they must be very agreeable *Entertainments*, when good Men of *mild Tempers* are the Masters of them.

Q. *Who ought to have the greatest regard in the Choice of their Company?*

A. It concerns all good *Christians* to take care in this point; for the Contagion of Vice is powerful.

ful, and their greatest Security is in standing at a distance from it; the frailty of Vertue is great, therefore all caution should be used, not to expose it to an infectious Air. But *young Men*, when they first appear in the World, ought to have a particular regard to it, their future Happiness, both *Temporal* and *Eternal*, depending so much on the Qualifications of those they converse with. Tho' they have received good Principles in their Education, yet they want *Practice* to confirm the *Habits* of *Vertue*, and *Courage* to resist the Allurements of Vice. They are apt to catch at any thing that indulges and countenances their irregular Appetites. The misfortune is, when they want Prudence most, they have least of it; therefore 'tis happy when they will listen to the Advice of their *Parents*, or some experienced Relation, who is able to direct them in an Affair of such consequence.

Q. *What are the mischievous Effects of bad Company to good Men?*

A. If they are not by degrees entirely corrupted, yet the *Horror* they ought to have for Sin, is very much *abated* by their seeing it frequently committed. They are led into uncharitable Thoughts concerning their Neighbour, whose *Reputation* in such Company is never spared, but loaded with all injurious and contumelious usage. Besides, it makes their own Duty difficult, for by not discountenancing such Practices by one means or other, they may contract a share in the Guilt of them, and embroil their own Minds by reflecting, whether or no they did what became good Christians upon such Occasions. So that Fire may as well be taken into a Man's bosom without burning, and Pitch touched

touched without defiling ; as bad Company frequented and delighted in, without receiving Damage and contracting Pollution.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

O Almighty God, who hast knit together thine Elect in one Communion and Fellowship, in the mystical Body of thy Son Christ our Lord ; Grant me Grace so to follow thy blessed Saints in all vertuous and godly Living, that I may come to those unspeakable Joys which thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love thee, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

II.

O God who hast prepared for them that love thee, such good things as pass Man's Understanding ; pour into my Heart such Love towards thee, that I loving thee above all things may obtain thy Promises, which exceed all that I can desire, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

III.

A Almighty God, make me so wise in this State of Probation and Trial, as to provide for Eternity, by walking in those Paths that conducted thy blessed Saints to everlasting Bliss. Keep it for ever in the purpose of my Heart, as it was in theirs, to obey those Laws which thou my Maker and Sovereign hast enjoined, and according to which I shall be one
Day

Day judged. Grant that I may with all possible care avoid Sin, the greatest Evil, and the most mischievous to my main Interest; and that I may at any Expence seek thy Favour, which is better than Life: That following thy blessed Saints in the Meekness and Humility of their Minds, in the Mortification of their carnal Appetites, in their entire Submission to thy Divine Will, in their Charity to the Souls and Bodies of Men, in their Patience under Sufferings, and in their readiness to take up the Cross, I may attain that Happiness they now possess, and inherit those Promises which they are made Partakers of, through the Merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

IV.

MOST gracious God, the Author of Sanctity, and Lover of Unity; whose Wisdom has established an admirable Communion between the Members of the same mystical Body, whereof thy Son Jesus Christ is the Head. I bless and praise thy holy Name for all thy Servants departed this Life in thy Faith and Fear. I congratulate their Victories over the World, who overcame themselves, and led in Triumph their own Passions. I commemorate with all Thankfulness their heroick Piety, who served their Lord in Hunger and Thirst, in Prison and Chains, on Racks and in Torture; and who undauntedly encountered Death, armed with the greatest Terror. I rejoice in the Glory and Happiness they are now advanced to, the greatness of which the Heart of Man cannot conceive. Beseeching thee to give me Grace so to follow their good Examples, in the wise bestowing of
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my time here below, that I may follow them in their happy Passage out of this World, and with them be made Partaker of thy heavenly Kingdom; which I beseech thee to hasten, and shortly to accomplish the Number of thine Elect; that I with all those that are departed in the true Faith of thy holy Name, may have my perfect Consummation and Bliss, both in Body and Soul, in thy eternal and everlasting Glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



The End of the Festivals.

A
COMPANION
FOR THE
FASTS
OF THE
Church of *England* :
WITH
Collects and Prayers
For each SOLEMNITY.

The Third Edition.

When the Bride-groom shall be taken from them, then shall they fast in those Days. St. Luke 5. 35.

Be afflicted and mourn and weep : Let your Laughter be turned to Mourning, and your Joy to Heaviness. Humble your selves in the Sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. St. James 4. 9, 10.

Jejunium non est perfecta virtus, sed ceterarum virtutum fundamentum.

S. Hierom. ad Demet. p. 23.

L O N D O N :

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Preliminary Instructions,

CONCERNING

F A S T S.

Quest. **W**hat do you mean by Fasts?

Ans. Days set apart by the Church, or by Civil Authority, or by our own Appointment, to humble our selves before God, in punishing our Bodies, and afflicting our Souls, in order to a real Repentance. By outward Significations testifying our Grief for Sins past, and by using them as Means to secure us from returning to those Sins, for which we express so great a Detestation.

Q. *Wherein consists the Nature of Fasting?*

A. In a strict Sense it implies a *total Abstinence* from all Meat and Drink the whole Day, from Morning to Evening; and then, to refresh our selves sparingly as to the Quantity, and not delicately as to the Quality of the Food. And in this manner not one but more Days were past in a continual *Fast* by the *Primitive Christians* before *Easter*. In a large Sense it implies an *Abstinence* from some kind of Food, especially Flesh and Wine, as was used by *Daniel*; or a Dan. 10. 3. deferring eating beyond the usual Hours, as the *Primitive Christians* did on their *stationary Days*, till *three* in the Afternoon; to which Hour their publick Assemblies continued on those Days. So

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that hereby some *Self-denial* is designed to our Bodily Appetites; for no *Abstinence* can partake of the Nature of *Fasting*, except there be something in it that afflicts us.

Q. *How many sorts of Fasts are there?*

A. There are two sorts, *publick* and *private*. The first we are determined to observe by Virtue of that Obedience that is due to our lawful Superiours; and for those Reasons they enjoyn it. The second proceeds from our own voluntary Imposition, and arises from our Obligation to perform it at some times, tho' it is left to our own Discretion to determine the Season.

Q. *Whence arises the Obligation of a Christian to fast?*

A. Nature seems to suggest it, as a proper Means to express Sorrow and Grief; and as a fit Method to dispose our Minds towards the Consideration of any thing that is serious. And therefore all Nations from ancient Times have used *Fasting* as a part of Repentance, and as a means to turn away God's Anger. As it is plain
 Jonah 3. 5. in the Case of the *Ninevites*; which was a Notion common to them with the rest of the World. And tho' our Saviour has left no positive Precept about *Fasting*, yet he joyns it with *Almsgiving* and *Prayer*, unquestionable Duties; and the Directions he gave in his admirable *Sermon* upon the *Mount*, concerning the Performance of it, sufficiently supposes the Necessity of the Duty; which if governed by such Rules as our Saviour there lays down, will be accepted by God, and openly rewarded by him. Besides, our Saviour says expressly, that the time should come, when his Disciples should fast. And when he brings in the *Pharisee* boasting that he fasted
 Mat. 6. 16, 17, 18. twice

twice in the Week, our *Saviour* in no manner blames him for *fasting*, but corrects his Vanity for *boasting* of it.

Q. *Why did not our Saviour's Disciples fast while he was upon Earth?*

A. Because *Fasting* belongs to Mourners, but while our *Saviour* was with them, 'twas a time of Joy and Gladness; and consequently as improper a Season for the Signification of Sorrow, as it would be to forbid Eating and Drinking at a Wedding. *Can the Children of the Bride-chamber fast, saith our Saviour, while the Bridegroom is with them? But when the Bridegroom is taken from them, then shall they fast.* Luke 5. 34. Whereby our *Saviour* does not go about to excuse his Disciples from those Obligations of *Fasting*, which St. *John's* Disciples and the *Pharisees* practised; but intimates, that though it was not fit for them at present, yet when he was gone from them, they also should *fast in those Days*.

Q. *What Examples have we of Fasting in the Scriptures?*

A. It was a Duty all along observed by devout Men, and acceptable to God, under the *Old* and *New Testament*; both as it was helpful to their Devotion, and as it became a part of it. *Publick* enjoyned *Fasts* upon extraordinary Occasions are so frequent in Scripture, they need no particular notice. And as to *private Fasts*, we read that *David* chasten'd his Soul with *Fasting*. Psal. 69. 10. And *Daniel* fought the Lord, not only with Dan. 9. 3. *Prayers and Supplications, but with Fasting.* *Anna* served and worshipp'd God in *Prayers and Fastings* night and day. Luke 2. 37. *Cornelius* was *Fasting* Acts 10. 30. as well as *Praying*, when the Vision came that

brought Salvation to his House. When Paul
 Acts 13. 2. and Barnabas were to be ordained Apostles, there
 was Fasting joyned to Prayer: And St. Paul ap-
 2 Cor. 6. 5. proved himself a Minister of God in *Fastings*,
 11. 27. as well as Labours and Watchings: *He kept his*
 1 Cor. 9. *Body under, and brought it into subjection, lest*
 27. *while he preached to others, he himself should be*
a cast-away.

Q. Have we any account, that the Apostles
after our Saviour's Ascension practised Fasting
and Abstinence?

Ep. 58. c. 4. *A. Epiphanius* tells us that *St. James the Great*
 30. c. 24. and *St. John* were very eminent for a mortified
 Life; that they never eat either Flesh or Fish,
 and wore but one Coat and a Linen Garment.
 Padag. *Clemens Alexandrinus* relates of *St. Matthew*,
 lib. 2. c. 1. that he was so far from indulging his Appetite,
 that he refused to gratifie it with lawful and or-
 dinary Provisions, eating no Flesh, his usual Diet
 being nothing but Herbs, Roots, Seeds and Ber-
 ries. And 'tis recorded of *St. James the Less*,
 Bishop of *Jerusalem*, a Man of that divine Tem-
 per, that he was the Love and Wonder of the
 Age; that he wholly abstained from Flesh, and
 drank neither Wine nor strong Drink, nor ever
 used the Bath; and that his whole Body was
 covered with Paleness thro' Fasting.

Q. Was Fasting practised in the Primitive
Church?

A. The ancient Christians were very exact
 both in their *weekly* and *annual Fasts*. Their
weekly Fasts were kept on *Wednesdays* and *Fri-*
days; because on the one our Lord was betrayed,
 and on the other crucified. These *Fasts* were
 Tertul. de called their *Stations*, from the military Word
 jejun. c. 2. of keeping their Guard, as *Tertullian* observes.
 Tho'

Tho' others think more immediately from the *Jewish* Phrase, and the Custom of those devout Men; who either out of their own Devotion, or as the Representatives of the People, assisted at the Oblations of the Temple; not departing thence till the Service was over. For these *Fasts* usually lasted till after *three* in the Afternoon, as did their publick Assemblies. Their *Annual Fast* was that of *Lent*, by way of Preparation to the *Feast* of our *Saviour's* Resurrection. But this was variously observed, according to different Times and Places.

Q. *What was the manner of Fasting among the Primitive Christians?*

A. They observed their *Fasts* with great strictness. All in general on such Days abstained from drinking Wine and eating Flesh; the greatest part fed only on *Herbs* or *Pulse*, with a little *Bread*. They confined themselves to cheap and ordinary Diet, without Sawces or relishing Delicacies. Some used the *dry Diet*, as *Nuts*, *Almonds*, and such like Fruits; others fed only upon Bread and Water.

Cyr. Hiero.
catech. 4.

Q. *What Occasions of Fasting are particularly taken notice of in the Primitive Church?*

A. There was the *Fast* of a *Penitent*, who after *Baptism* having committed some grievous Sin, was for it excluded the Assemblies of Christians, either by his own Conscience or by publick Sentence, till he was reconciled to God and the Church. Rigorous was the Penance of these *lapsed Christians*, and their Fasting truly an Affliction of their Souls; for they lay in *Sackcloth* and *Ashes*, watch'd and fasted, groan'd and wept to the Lord their God; and not only supplicated God's Mercy, but begg'd the Pardon and

Prayers of their Christian Brethren. Another solemn Occasion of *fasting* was, the Profession of Repentance those made who were *converted to the Faith*, and *preparing to be Baptised*. And it was the Practice not only of the *Candidates* to fast, but of the whole Congregation with them, there being stated Times in the Primitive Church for the administering *that Sacrament*, as *Easter* and *Whitsuntide*, the fasting on both these Accounts did often fall in with the Fast before *Easter*.

Q. But does not St. Paul place the abstaining from Meats among the Doctrine of seducing Spirits?

A. It cannot be supposed, that by *abstaining from Meats* St. Paul should mean the Duty of *Fasting*; because that was observed by devout Men, and acceptable to God both under the *Old* and *New Testament*; and our Saviour himself had given directions concerning the Performance of it in his admirable Sermon upon the Mount. And our Apostle practised it also upon several occasions. Therefore it is most probable he does therein condemn the Opinions of some ancient Hereticks that *departed from the Faith*, who as they excluded those from Salvation that engaged in Matrimony, so they held the eating the Flesh of any living Creatures unlawful; a Doctrine very likely borrowed from *Pythagoras* and his Followers, being defended with such variety of Learning by *Porphyry*. Whereas they who are instructed in their Christian Liberty, and *know the Truth*, are fully secured that God has permitted the use of such his Creatures for our Nourishment and Sustenance, provided we receive them always with Temperance and Thank-giving;

1 Tim. 4.
1 & 3.

Mat. 6. 16,
17, 18.

1 Cor. 9.
27.

1 Tim. 4. 1.

De Abf. ab
esu Anim.

Gen. 9. 3.
Acts 2. 46.
27. 33.

giving; and that the *Gospel* has taken away the difference between things clean and unclean. Rom. 14.
14.
Acts 10. 15.

Q. When may a Fast be accounted religious?

A. When it is undertaken upon Religious Ends and Purposes. To restrain the looser Appetites of the Flesh, and to keep the Body under. To give the Mind liberty and ability to consider and reflect whilst it is actually engaged in divine Service, or preparing for some solemn part of it. To humble our selves before God under a sense of our Sins, and the Misery to which they expose us. To deprecate his Anger, and to supplicate for his Mercy and Favour. To express Revenge against our selves for the Abuse of those good things God alloweth us to enjoy; and of which we have made our selves unworthy by sinful Excesses. When 'tis used as a Piece of Self-denial, in order the better to command our Fleshly Appetites; and as a means to raise in our Minds a due Valuation of the Happiness of the other World, when we despise the Enjoyment of this. Above all, to make it acceptable to God, it should be accompanied with fervent Prayer, and a charitable Relief of the Poor, whose Miseries we may the better guess at, when we are bearing some of the Inconveniencies of Hunger.

Q. What must we do if Fasting is prejudicial to our Health, and indisposes us for the Service of God?

A. In this case it concerns us to deal impartially with our selves, and not to make use of it as a Pretence to excuse our selves from the Obligation of this Duty; especially when the Commands of our lawful *Superiours* require the Observation of it. But if it have this Effect, we ought to eat more sparingly, and with less delicacy

cacy than at other times; and to be more exact in performing those *Devotions* that ought to accompany our *Fasts*. The Church aims at our Advantage in the Rules she prescribes, and is always supposed to make Allowances for particular Cases, which cannot be included in general Rules.

Q. Is this Humiliation, and afflicting our Bodies by Fasting, and giving outward Marks of our inward Grief for Sin, agreeable to the Christian Religion?

A. Though 'tis certain, that in the Exercise of Repentance, the main thing required is to return sincerely from our Evil Ways; yet it is plain in the *Prophets*, that this inward Grief was expressed by outward Signs, of *Fasting, Weeping and Mourning*. And that this was not peculiar to the *Genius* of the Old Testament, appears by the Directions given by *St. James* concerning Repentance: *Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your Laughter be turned into Mourning, and your Joy into Heaviness. Humble your selves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.* Which Words, if examined by the Phrases of the *Old Testament*, our best Guide in interpreting the *New*, import outward Expressions of Grief and Sorrow used by devout People in token of hearty Repentance. The great Fast on the Day of *Expiation*, was called *Levit. 16. a Day of afflicting their Souls*: Which consisted not only in *abstinence* from Food, but in putting on the Habit and Appearance of *Mourners*; which in those Eastern Countries was *Sackcloth, lying upon the Ground, strewing Ashes on their Heads*. And in such Days of *afflicting their Souls*, they abstained from all sorts of Pleasure.

And

James 4.
9, 10.

Levit. 16.
29, 31.

And to these Expressions of Sorrow, the Words of St. *James* plainly allude; and were so literally practised by the Primitive Christians of those Countries.

Q. Are we obliged to use the same Testimonies of our inward Grief, whereby it was express'd in ancient Times?

A. I think not; because the using of *Sackcloth and Ashes* formerly, when Men humbled themselves before God, was in Conformity to the Custom of *Mourners* in those Times; who express'd their Sense of Grief after that manner. But then I think we ought to express the same thing by other Signs proper to the Custom of *Mourners* in our Days. By forbearing our usual Meals, by abstaining from all manner of Pleasure, by neglecting the adorning our Bodies, by retiring from Company, by laying aside Business, and by bewailing our Loss. *A Sinner*, saith St. *Cyprian*, ought to lament the death of his Souls, at least as much as the loss of a Friend: And St. *Chrysostom* makes use of the same Comparison. And surely it will become us to mourn and lament, who have offended God, our best Friend, whose Favour we have consequently lost, if we are heartily sorry for having offended him.

Q. How is a Day of Fasting to be observed by serious Christians?

A. Not only by interrupting and abridging the Care of our Bodily Sustenance, but by carefully inquiring into the state of our Souls; charging our selves with all those Transgressions we have committed against God's Laws, humbly confessing them with Shame and Confusion of Face, with hearty Contrition and Sorrow

row for them; deprecating God's Displeasure, and begging him to turn away his Anger from us. By interceding with him for such Spiritual and Temporal Blessings upon our selves and others, as are needful and convenient. By improving our Knowledge in all the Particulars of our Duty. By relieving the Wants and Necessities of the Poor, that our Humiliation and Prayers may find Acceptance with God. If the Fast be publick, by attending the publick Places of God's Worship.

Q. *What ought we chiefly to beware of in our Exercises of Fasting?*

A. We ought to avoid all Vanity, and valuing our selves upon such Performances; and therefore in our *private Fasts*, not to proclaim them to others by any external Affectations; *Mat. 6. 18. that we may not appear unto Men to fast.* Not to despise or judge our Neighbour, who does not, and it may be has not the same Reason to tye himself up to such methods. Not to destroy the Health of our Bodies, and thereby make them unfit Instruments for the Operation of our Minds, or the Discharge of our worldly Employments. Particular Care ought to be taken, that we do not grow thereby *morose* and *sour*, *peevish* and fretful towards others, which Severity to our selves may be apt to incline us to; for that is so far from expressing our Repentance, that it makes fresh work for it by increasing our Guilt.

The PRAYERS.

I.

O Lord, who for our sakes didst fast forty Days and forty Nights; Give me Grace to use such Abstinence, that my Flesh being subdued to the Spirit, I may ever obey thy Godly Motions in Righteousness and true Holiness; to thy Honour and Glory, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, One God, World without end. *Amen.*

II.

Turn thou me, O good Lord, and so shall I be turned; be favourable, O Lord, be favourable unto me, who turn to thee, in weeping, fasting and praying; for thou art a God full of Compassion, Long-suffering, and of great Pity; thou sparest when I deserve Punishment, and in thy Wrath thinkest upon Mercy; spare me, good Lord, spare me, and let me not be brought to Confusion; hear me, O Lord, for thy Mercy is great, and after the multitude of thy Mercies look upon me, thro' the Merits and Mediation of thy blessed Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

III.

I Acknowledge, O God, my own Vileness by reason of my Sins, and am heartily grieved for the loss of thy Favour. What Humiliation, O Lord, can sufficiently express the Greatness of such a Loss! But I will weep and mourn, because I have offended thee; and I will repent as it were in Dust and Ashes. I will mortifie those
inor-

inordinate Appetites which have so fatally betrayed me; I will contradict all those Inclinations which have made me stray from the ways of thy Commandments. And do thou, O Lord, wean my Soul from the Pleasures of the Body, which so often corrupt it, and render it incapable of relishing Spiritual Enjoyments. Let it not contract too great a Familiarity with the Delights and Satisfaction of Sense, since 'twas created for more exalted Pleasures, and must shortly quit those here below; that so when I come to leave this World, I may be qualified for the blessed Conversation of Spirits in thy Heavenly Kingdom, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

C H A P. I.

The Forty Days of Lent.

Q. *What do you mean by Lent?*

A. *Lent* in the old *Saxon* is known to signify the *Spring*, and thence has been taken in common Language for the *Spring Fast*; or the time of Humiliation generally observed by Christians before *Easter*, the great Festival of our Saviour's Resurrection. And a Man must know little of *Ecclesiastical History*, or have but a small Acquaintance with the *Primitive Fathers* of the Church, who doth not acknowledge the Observation of *Lent* to be most ancient.

Q. *How may we judge of the Antiquity of this Fast?*

A. From

A. From the Dispute that was very early in the Church concerning the Observation of *Easter*, one point whereof was, concerning the ending of the *Ante-Paschal* Fast; which both sides determined upon the Day they kept the *Festival*; which is sufficient to let us know, that there was then such a Fast kept by both sides, and had been in all probability as anciently kept, as the *Fest* of the *Resurrection*. And *Ireneus*, who Euseb. Hist. lib. 5. c. 24. lived but *Ninety* Years from the Death of *St. John*, and convers'd familiarly with *St. Polycarp*, as *Polycarp* had with *St. John* and other Apostles, has happen'd to let us know, though incidentally, that as it was observed in his time, so it was in that of his Predecessors, but with great variety as to the length of it. And there being no Church to be found anciently, wherein there was not a solemn Fast observed before *Easter*, is a sufficient Argument to derive it from the Practice of the first Christians; for otherwise it cannot be conceived, how it should so universally prevail in all Countries where Christianity was planted.

Q. Why was this solemn Season of Humiliation limited to forty Days?

A. The Church had, I suppose, a respect to *forty Days*, as what was esteemed a proper *Penitential Season*; which seems very anciently to have been appropriated to *Humiliation*. For not to reckon up the *forty Days* in which God drowned the World; or the *forty Years* in which the Children of *Israel* did Penance in the Wilderness; or the *forty Stripes* by which Malefactors were to be corrected; whoever considers that *Moses* did not once only fast this number of Days; that *Elias* also fasted in

Gen. 7. 4.
Numb. 14.
34.
Deut. 25. 3.
9. 9. 18. 25.
1 Kings 19.
8.

in the Wilderness the same space of time; that
 Jonah 3. 4. the *Ninevites* had precisely as many Days allowed
 Mat. 4. 2. for their Repentance; and that our *blessed Saviour* himself when he was pleased to fast, observed the same length of time; whoever considers these *Fasts*, cannot but think that this number of Days was used by them all, as the common solemn number belonging to extraordinary Humiliation, and that those were accustomed to afflict themselves *forty Days*, who would deprecate any great and heavy Judgment.

Q. *What was the End and Design of the Fast of Lent?*

A. That it should be set apart as a proper Season for Mortification, and the exercise of Self-denial. To humble and afflict our selves for our Sins by frequent Fastings; and to punish our too often Abuses of God's Creatures, by Abstinence, and by forbearing the lawful Enjoyment of them. To form and settle firm Purposes of holy Obedience. To pray frequently to God both in private and publick for Pardon, and his holy Spirit. To put us in mind of that sore Trial and Temptation, which Christ then endured for our sakes; particularly to perpetuate the Memory of our *Saviour's* Sufferings; and to make as it were a publick Confession of our Belief, that he *died for our Salvation*. And consequently for fitting our selves to receive the Tokens and Pledges of his Love, with greater Joy and Gladness; because with fuller Assurance that God is reconciled to us thro' the Death and Passion of *Christ Jesus*.

Q. *Is it the Design of the Church to oblige her Members to fast the whole forty Days?*

A. I think not, because in the ancient Church
 this

this Season was observed with great Variety; which arose from the various Customs of different Churches, as well as from the Devotion of several People, who all united in the solemn and religious Exercises of this Season, tho' they differed in the manner of their Fasting. And none but the Licentious, who love no restraint, or those whom Prejudice has made inconsiderate, can think fit to blame an Institution so well framed to promote Piety and Devotion; especially when 'tis enjoyed with so much Moderation.

Socrates
Hist. Eccl.
lib. 5. c. 22.

Q. After what Manner did the Primitive Christians observe their Fasts in Lent?

A. There was variety in their Manner of Fasting as well as in the Number of their Days. In the *Holy Week* they that were strict would eat nothing but Bread, and Water, and Salt, or Nuts and Almonds, or such-like Fruits, which was called the *dry Diet*. In the rest of *Lent* some abstained from Flesh and Wine; and others forbore all Fish likewise as well as Flesh, which was the Custom of the *Greeks*. Some contented themselves with Eggs and Fruits, others forbore both, and lived upon Bread, Herbs and Roots; and in this variety they agreed in one thing, which was not to eat till the Evening, and then such Food as was least delicate.

Q. How did the Primitive Church treat notorious Offenders in this Holy Season?

A. Such Persons as stood convicted of notorious Sins were put to open Penance, and punished in this World, that their Souls might be sav'd in the Day of the Lord; and that others admonished by their Example might be the more afraid

Sozo. Hist.
Eccl. lib.
7. c. 16.

fraid of offending ; the whole Church supplicated God in their behalf, that he would be pleased to grant them Repentance, and perfect Remission and Forgiveness of their Sins.

Q. But since the Life of a Christian ought always to be govern'd by the Rules of our holy Religion, is it not superstitious to set apart any such particular time as Lent for this purpose?

A. 'Tis certain it ought to be the constant endeavour of a Christian, in all Times and in all Places, to have his Duty in his Eye, and to have always a great regard to what God requires from him. But considering the great Corruption of the World, and the Frailty of our Natures, and how often we transgress the Bounds of our Duty, and how backward we are to cross our fleshly Appetites, 'tis very happy we have such a *solemn Season* stated for Recollection and the Exercise of Repentance ; when the Command of our Superiours, and the Provision of fit means to assist us, and the Practice of devout Christians in all Ages, call loudly upon us to reform our Lives. For that which is a Duty at all times, when our Follies make it necessary, cannot be less so when we are required to give outward Proofs and Demonstrations of it.

Q. How does it become a devout Christian to spend his time during the Holy Season of Lent?

A. Some part ought to be spent in *Fasting*, more in *Abstinence*, according to the Circumstances of his Health, and outward Condition in the World ; and this with a Design to deny and punish himself, and to express his Humiliation before God for his past Transgressions. The Ornament of Attire may be laid aside, as
im-

improper to express the Sense of Mourners, and the frequency of receiving and paying Visits may be interrupted as unseasonable when our Minds are oppress'd with Sorrow. Publick Assemblies for Pleasure and Diversion should be avoided as Enemies to that Seriousness we now profess. Our Retirements should be filled with reading pious Discourses, and with frequent Prayer, and with examining the state of our Minds. The publick Devotions should be constantly attended, and those instructing Exhortations from the Pulpit which are so generally establish'd in many Churches in this Season. We should be liberal in our Alms, and very ready to employ our selves in all Opportunities of relieving either the temporal or spiritual Wants of our Neighbours. And we should frequently exercise our selves in the Meditation of divine Subjects, the best means to make all Discourses from the Press and the Pulpit effectual to our Salvation.

Q. What do you mean by Meditation in a religious sense?

A. Such a serious Application of the Mind to the Consideration of any divine Subject, whether any Mystery of the Gospel Institution, or any Truth or Vertue of the Christian Religion, as may dispose it firmly to believe and embrace it, and stir up all the Faculties of the Soul to a vigorous Prosecution of it. And 'tis this Exercise of the Will and Affections that distinguishes Meditation from what we call Study.

Q. How ought we to prepare our selves for the Exercise of this Duty?

A. By remembering that we are in the Presence of God, who knoweth all our Thoughts, and searcheth out all our Ways; that we are

unworthy by reason of our Sins to present our selves before him ; and that we are incapable without his Assistance to think any thing that is good. And therefore adoring his infinite Majesty with profound Reverence, we should humbly beg his Aid and Help, so to enlighten our Understandings, and to influence our Wills, that the present Action may tend to his Glory, and the good of our own Souls.

Q. How is the Understanding exercised in Meditation ?

A. In setting the Subject of our *Meditation* in such a Light, as may excite the Will and Affections to pursue and embrace it. If it concerns our *Saviour's* Life or Death, it considers the *Dignity* of his *Person*, upon *whose Account* the Action was performed ; the End for which it was done ; the Place and Circumstances ; the Fruits and Effects of it. If the Subject relates to any Vertue of a Christian Life ; it considers the *Nature* of the *Duty*, and wherein it consists ; who are properly the *Objects* of it ; the Obligations there are from Reason and Revelation to practise it ; the Temptations that chiefly seduce from it ; and those particular Instances whereby the Vertue may be exercised ; and the great Advantages that accrue to us, both in this Life and the next, by the diligent Performance of it.

Q. How are the Will and Affections exercised in this Duty ?

A. In *chusing* and *pursuing* what by the Understanding is represented as *good* and advantageous to us ; and in *shunning* and *avoiding* what is represented as *evil* and destructive to our Happiness. In order hereunto firm Purposes are formed of governing our Lives with such a prospect
for

for the time to come; the use of the best means are resolved upon, and we determine *when*, and upon what occasions, we will put such a Virtue in Practice, or imitate such an Action; in what *Places* and in what *Company* we will stand upon our Guard, lest we be surprised by such a Vice. From hence we proceed to exercise our selves in holy Affections; as in *Love* and *Desire* of what is *good*; in *Hatred* and Detestation of what is *evil*; in *Sorrow*, Shame and Self-abhorrence for having transgressed in any particular; in *Praise* and Thanksgiving for having been enabled in any tolerable measure to have done our Duty; in *Adoration*, and *Imitation*, in *Faith*, in *Hope*, and *Charity*, and in *Resignation* of our selves to God.

Q. What are the blessed Fruits of holy Meditation?

A. It has an universal Influence upon the whole Life of a Christian, and is an admirable Instrument to quicken our Progress in all the Graces of God's Holy Spirit. It illuminates our Understandings with the Knowledge of our Duty, and stores our Memories with all such Arguments as are proper to excite us to the Performance of it. The Voice of Conscience is by this means attended to, and we can never make any considerable Breaches upon it, without being allarmed with severe Reproaches. It wings our Prayers with Reverence and Devotion, and encreases our Importunity by impressing a lively Sense of the Necessity and Importance of those things we beg of God. It habituates our Minds to spiritual Objects, and raises them above the perishing things of this Life. It strengthens our holy Purposes, arms us against Temptations, and inflames all the

Faculties of our Souls with earnest Desires of attaining and enjoying our chiefeſt Good.

Q. How ought we to conclude our Meditation?

A. By begging God to affect our Minds with a conſtant Senſe of our Duty in all the Particulars of it, chiefly that he would enable us to perform thoſe Reſolutions we have made of advancing in Piety and Vertue, that he would not leave us to our ſelves, but ſo aſſiſt us with his Grace, that what we perceive and know to be our Duty, we may faithfully fulfil all the Days of our Life.

The PRAYERS.

I.

Almighty and everlaſting God, who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we deſire or deſerve; pour down upon me the abundance of thy Mercy, forgiving me thoſe things whereof my Conſcience is afraid, and giving me thoſe good things, which I am not worthy to aſk, but thro' the Merits and Mediation of Jeſus Chriſt thy Son our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

Grant, I beſeech thee, Almighty God, that I who for my evil Deeds do worthily deſerve to be puniſhed, by the Comfort of thy Grace may mercifully be relieved, thro' our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

III. Al-

III.

A Almighty God; give me Grace to use such Abstinence during this Season dedicated to the exercise of Repentance, that my Flesh may be subdued to the Spirit, and my Mind left free to approach thee, with Ardour and Fervency of Affection. Inure me by Self-denial to bring my Body into Subjection, and to punish all those Excesses I have been guilty of in the use of thy Creatures. Let my Retirement from the World, make me see the Vanity and Emptiness of it; and teach me to relish the Pleasures of spiritual Enjoyments. Let me spend those solitary Hours in the improving my Christian Knowledge, and do thou open my Eyes that I may see the wondrous things of thy Law. Make me heartily to bewail my Sins, and do thou work in me that godly Sorrow, not to be repented of. Grant that I may sincerely examine the State of my own Mind, and do thou search and try me, and lead me into the way everlasting. That perceiving how bitter a thing it is to depart from the living God, I may no longer continue at a distance from the Fountain of all Joy and Happiness; but that by confessing and forsaking my Sins, I may be entirely converted unto thee, and that they may be blotted out, when the Times of refreshing shall come from the Presence of the Lord; thro' Jesus Christ my only Saviour. *Amen.*

IV.

A Almighty God, who art the supreme Happiness of a rational Creature, whom to know is eternal Life; fix my Thoughts, my

Hopes and my Desires upon Heaven and heavenly things ; let me remember thee upon my Bed and meditate on thee in the Night-Watches. Grant that I may so consider thy Precepts, that I may understand the Measures of my Duty, and govern all my Actions by those Rules thou hast prescribed me ; may so apply thy Promises, that I may adore that infinite Goodness, that has prepared such glorious Rewards for those that love thee, and never forfeit my Title to them by consenting to any known Iniquity ; may so recollect my Infirmities, that I may watch against them ; my own Follies, that I may amend them ; may so call to mind thy wonderful Deliverances, both in respect of my Body and of my Soul, that I may be convinced that I am preserved not by my own Strength, but by thy Almighty Power, that thy Name may have the Glory. Make my Heart the Seat of Prayer and holy Meditation ; that my Mind being inured to spiritual Objects, I may despise and condemn this World, and be prepared in the Disposition of my Soul to pass Eternity in contemplating thy glorious Excellencies, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, World without end. *Amen.*

C H A P. II.

Ash-Wednesday, or the first Day of Lent.

Q. *WHY does the Fast of forty Days, called Lent, begin on Ash-Wednesday?*

A. Because the *four* Days of this Week complete the *forty* Days; it being never the Custom of the Church to fast on *Sundays*; whereon we commemorate so great a Blessing as our Saviour's Resurrection; the *six* Sundays in *Lent* being deducted, and these *four* Days being added, make the Number entire.

Q. *Why is the first Day of Lent called Ash-Wednesday?*

A. From the Custom that prevailed in the Ancient Church, for Penitents at this time to express their Humiliation by lying in Sackcloth and Ashes; by the coarseness of Sackcloth they ranked themselves, as it were, among the meanest and lowest Condition of Men; by Ashes, and sometimes Earth cast upon their Heads, they made themselves lower than the lowest of the Creatures of God, and put themselves in mind of their Mortality, which would reduce them to Dust and Ashes.

Q. *What was the Discipline of the Primitive Church at the beginning of Lent?*

A. That such Persons as stood convicted of notorious Crimes, were put to open Penance. For according to the ancient Discipline, those who after Baptism fell into any great and notorious Sins, if they were Penitents, were ad-

mitted to Penance, and to the Prayers of the Church for their Reconciliation with God. But if they were refractory Sinners, or their Crimes of a deep dye, they were excommunicated and not admitted to Reconciliation with the Church, but after a long and tedious course of Penance, after the most publick Testimonies of Sorrow and Repentance, and the greatest Signs of Humiliation that can be imagined. For *Tertullian* tells us, *they lay in Sackcloth and Ashes, they disfigured their Bodies with a neglected Unclean-ness, and dejected their Minds with Grief; they used no other Food but what was necessary to keep up Life, and frequently nourished their Prayers with rigorous Fasting; they groaned, they wept to the Lord their God Day and Night; they fell down at the Feet of the Presbyters; they kneeled to the Friends of God, and begged of all their Fellow Christians to pray for them.* These Severities they willingly submitted to, as Tokens of their Sorrow, and Evidences of their Reformation; and thought themselves happy upon any Terms to be admitted to the Peace of God and the Church.

Q. How were Penitents re-admitted into the Church?

Cypr. E-
pist. 17, 18.
Edit. Oxon.

A. When they had finish'd the time prescribed for the undergoing these Severities, if their Repentance upon Examination was found to be real, they were re-admitted into the Church by the Imposition of the Hands of the Clergy, the Party to be absolved kneeling before the *Bishop*, or in his absence before the *Presbyter*; who laying his Hand upon his Head solemnly blessed and absolved him; whereupon he was received with universal Joy, and restored to a participation of the

the Holy Sacrament, and to all other Acts of Church-Communion.

Q. What Method has the Church of England taken to supply the want of ancient Discipline at this time?

A. Till our spiritual Fathers can be so happy Mat. 16. 19.
as to succeed in discharging those Obligations Ch. 18. 17.
they lie under of restoring to the Church that Joh. 20. 23.
Discipline she has a Right to; being founded 1 Cor. 5. 3,
upon the express Laws of Christ and his Apo- 4. 5.
stles, sufficiently explained to us by the Pra- V. 12, 13.
ctice of the Primitive and Apostolical Church, 2 Cor. 2. 6.
very useful to recover those that have erred Ch. 12. 10.
from the Truth and Piety, and absolutely ne- 13. 2, 10.
cessary to preserve Religion in its greatest Pu- Tit. 3. 9.
rity; till, I say, this blessed time shall come, 1 Tim. 6.
which good Men wish for, and bad Men fear, 3 & 5.
the *Church of England*, to supply this want,
sets before her Members the Curses due to all
Sin, and puts them in mind of God's dreadful
Tribunal, where the Impenitent shall be most
certainly condemned; thereby endeavouring to
bring every Man to judge and condemn himself,
that he may truly repent of his past Follies,
and carefully avoid those Sins for the time to
come, which draw upon Men the Judgments of
God.

Q. But is not the saying Amen to these Sentences of God's Law, a cursing of our selves, and is it not a wicked as well as a foolish thing?

*A. This pious Office, has indeed been so tra-
duced; but I believe it has not been considered,
that God himself commanded this manner of an-
swering; and tho' some Circumstances in reci-
ting these Curses among the Jews, might be cere-
monial; yet the Main of the Duty, and the End* Deut. 11.
for 29.
Ch. 27.

for which it was prescribed was truly moral, tending to the Honour of God and his Laws, and the promoting of true Piety. And the saying *Amen* does not signifie wishing, but affirming and declaring the Truth of what God has revealed; and thus *Amen* is often in the Gospel translated *verily*, and *Jesus* who is the Truth, is call'd *Amen*; so that *Amen* is no more than a Declaration, that he whom God bleſſeth is bleſſed, and he whom God curſeth is curſed; and theſe Curſes are like our Saviour's Woes in the Gospel, not Procurers of Evil, but compassionate Predictions of it, in order to prevent it.

Mat. 5. 18.

Mark 3. 28.

Luke 4. 24.

Rev. 3. 14.

Q. But has not Chriſt taken away the Curſe of the Law, being made a Curſe for us?

A. 'Tis true that our Saviour by Virtue of his Sacrifice, made Satisfaction for Sin, and bore that Curſe which belonged to us; and thereby acquitted and cleared all thoſe that believe in him from the Guilt of all thoſe Sins, for which there was no way of Expiation provided by the Law of *Moses*, that is of presumptuous Sins, for which there was no Sacrifice, but the Man was to be cut off. But ſtill this Redemption that was purchas'd for us, was upon the Condition of Repentance; ſo that impenitent Sinners are ſtill the Objects of God's Wrath; and tho' Pardon and Forgiveness of Sins was procured for us by the Death of Chriſt, yet Repentance is neceſſary to qualifye us to receive the Benefit of it. It being certain ſtill, that Sinners while they remain ſuch, are really accuſed; and to convince them of this, and make them own it, is the trueſt Bleſſing the Church can procure for them.

Q. What uſe does the Church make of ſetting the Curſes of God's Law before us?

A. To

A To press all Christians to a true and sincere Repentance from the Consideration of God's dreadful Wrath against all impenitent Sinners, which as it is severe in it self, and altogether intolerable, so it is just in its Proceedings, and absolutely unavoidable when it doth come; and when Sinners are awakened by this Consideration from their dreadful Security, they are encouraged to Repentance from God's readiness to receive true Penitents to Mercy; and from the great Benefits of it, Pardon and Peace in this Life, and eternal Happiness in the next.

Q. Since Repentance is so earnestly prest upon us at this time, pray wherein does it consist?

A. Repentance consists in such a *Change of Mind* as produces the like *Change in our Lives* and Conversations; so that to repent of our Sins, is to be convinc'd that we have done amiss; whence follows hearty Sorrow for our past Follies, and a firm and effectual Purpose and Resolution of Mind to forsake them for the time to come. And this Change is so great in our Desires and Resolutions, that the Scripture calls it a *new Nature*, the sincerity and reality whereof appears in Actions suitable to such new Principles.

Q. What Considerations are proper to excite in us Sorrow for our Sins?

A. Who can forbear grieving, when he considers that he is fallen under the heavy Displeasure of Almighty God, whose infinite Patience he has abused; that he is exposed to all those Miseries that are implied in an eternal Separation from the Fountain of all Happiness; that he has foolishly neglected the most important Concern of his Life, and done what in him lies to make himself everlastingly miserable; that he
has

has been ungrateful to his mighty Benefactor, and unfaithful to his best Friend; that he has affronted Heaven with those very Blessings he has received from thence; *that he has despised the Riches of God's Goodness and Forbearance, and Long-suffering, which should have led him to Repentance.*

Q. How ought we to express our Sorrow for our Sins?

A. By humbly confessing them to Almighty God with Shame and Confusion of Face; by an utter Abhorrence and Detestation of them; by being heartily troubled for what we have done amiss, and resolving not to do the like again. By testifying the reality of our inward Sorrow by all those ways that we find naturally occur in other Cases that afflict us; as in Fasting, Weeping, and Mourning; practised by Penitents both in the Old and New Testament; as is plain by

Ezra 10. 16. Ezra, David, Nehemiah, St. Peter, and St. Paul;
Psal. 69. 10. all deep Impressions of the Mind naturally pro-
Neh. 1. 4. ducing some proportionable effect upon the Bo-
Mat. 26. 75. dy; and it being very fit as the Soul and Body
Acts 9. 9. have been Partakers in the same Sins, so they should join together in the same Humiliations.

Q. What is meant by a firm Resolution of Amendment?

A. Such a Purpose of Mind as is formed upon calm Deliberation; after all the Difficulties of a holy Life have been thoroughly considered; and those Discouragements that will frequently attend us in pursuing such a Course. After all the Pleasures of Sin have been seriously weighed; and those Temptations that will constantly sollicit us to commit it; with all those Motives and Arguments that excite us to perform the

the one and avoid the other ; a Resolution of Mind framed after this manner, is likely to be permanent and lasting.

Q. What is the best Method to make a Resolution of Amendment effectual ?

A. To extend it to all the Particulars of our Duty, obliging our selves to have a Respect to all God's Commands, and to avoid every thing his Law forbids. To make it adequate to all Times, not only hereafter but at present ; not only when we are out of Temptations, but when we are under them, not only when we cannot act them, but when we can act and repeat them too. To resolve upon avoiding all those Occasions that betray us into the breach of our Duty ; and to make use of all those Means and Helps that are established for our growth in Grace, especially to pray to God that he would strengthen our Weakness, and confirm our holy Purposes ; and that they may be durable, frequently to repeat and renew them, particularly when we approach the *holy Table* of the Lord.

Q. Is all true Sorrow for Sin, and are all real Purposes of Amendment for the time to come, in all Cases sufficient ?

A. No ; in some Cases they are not sufficient ; for if we have any ways wronged or injured our Neighbour, we must make him all the *Reparation* we are able. Those that we have drawn into Sin by our Example, or neglect of our Duty towards them, we must endeavour all we can to contribute to their Recovery ; if we have injured their good *Names*, we must acknowledge our Faults, and vindicate their Reputations, and by all fitting ways repair their Credit ;

Credit; if we have wronged them in their *Estates*, either by Fraud or Force, we must make *Restitution*; that is, restore to the right Owner what we unjustly possess, or to his Heirs; or when neither can be discovered, to the Poor; and that with all those Measures and Circumstances, which upon Consideration we shall find to be our Duty. Without this Fruit of *Repentance*, all other Expressions of it will stand us in no stead; since our Obligation to *Restitution* is founded upon immutable Reason and natural Justice, which is *to do that to another, which we would have another do to us*. Moreover, the detaining of what we know to be another's Right, is a persevering in the first Injustice; and as long as we continue in that state, we cannot expect Pardon.

Q. Whence arises our Obligation to Repentance?

A. From the absolute *Necessity* of it, in order to make us capable of the *Mercy* and *Forgiveness* of God. Without Repentance, we must be unavoidably miserable; for 'tis the great *Condition* upon which our Salvation depends; and this Change in our wicked Tempers must be wrought, before we can be *qualified* for that Happiness God has promised in the Gospel-Covenant.

Q. What do you mean by the Forgiveness of Sins?

A. A Discharge and Release from that Punishment that is due to Sin. By transgressing God's Laws, we contract Guilt, which is an Obligation to suffer that Punishment the Wrath of God shall think fit to inflict: But by the Forgiveness of Sins we are freed and delivered from that

that Punishment to which we were before obnoxious.

Q. Is Repentance the valuable Consideration for which God bestows upon us Forgiveness of Sins ?

*A. The Scriptures are clear, that our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ laid down his Life as a Sacrifice for the Sins of the World, that by his Death he reconciled us to God; and by the Merit of his Sufferings, made full Satisfaction for us; so that 'tis for the sake of what Christ endured, that God was pleased to take off our Obligation to eternal Punishment: But yet this Reconciliation that is made by the Death of Christ between God and Man, is not absolute, but upon Conditions. We must repent to make us capable of that Pardon he has purchased for us, for our Saviour has joyned these two together in his Commission to the Apostles, saying, *That Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name throughout all Nations.* Luk. 24. 47.*

Q. How do Men delude themselves in this necessary Duty of Repentance ?

A. By delaying it for the present, and deferring it to some future Opportunity; either till the Heat of Youth is over, or till Sickness, Old Age, or Death overtakes them; which as it is the greatest Folly imaginable, to venture a Matter of such Consequence upon such an Uncertainty as future Time, which we can never be sure of; and to defer a necessary Work to the most unfitting Season of performing it; so 'tis highly wicked in that we abuse God's Patience, who gives us Time and Opportunity for it at present; and prefer the Slavery of Sin before his

his Service ; 'tis a Contempt of his Laws, and of that Wrath which is revealed from Heaven against all Unrighteousness ; and we may justly fear that such a Procedure may provoke God to withdraw that Grace which will then be necessary for the exercise of our Repentance, though he should give us Time and Opportunity.

Q. Is a Death-bed Repentance therefore absolutely impossible ?

A. Tho' I believe it very rarely takes Effect, yet I cannot think it *impossible* ; because the Nature of Repentance consisting in the *Change* of our *Minds* ; and the *Change* in our *Lives* being only the necessary effect of that inward Change when 'tis sincere ; 'tis possible the Change of our *Hearts* may be *true, full, and sufficient*, and yet we may want Time and Opportunity to shew the Effect of it in our Actions. And when God sees it thus, he may take the inward Will and Choice for the outward Service and Performance ; because he foresees that if Time had been allowed, Obedience would certainly have followed. Besides, we find that the Resolutions of a Sick-bed, tho' very rarely, yet sometimes have been effectual, which is sufficient to prove the thing possible ; and if *Divines* thought otherwise, 'twould be in vain for them to exhort Persons in such Circumstances to repent and turn to God.

Q. Wherein consists the Danger of a Death-bed Repentance ; and how is the Case of such dying Penitents deplorable ?

A. Considering the Difficulty of a thorough Change, and the disadvantageous Circumstances of a Sick-bed, 'tis highly probable that whosoever defers it till that Time will never repent at all ;

all; or if he does, his penitential Resolutions being founded upon such temporary Principles, as the Fear of Death and the Absence of Temptation, they will seldom prove strong and vigorous enough to produce a thorough Reformation; as is plain in the case of those that recover, among whom there are very few that are true and constant to those Purposes of Amendment, which they formed upon the Prospect of approaching Death. But supposing their penitential Purposes be rightly qualified; considering the Fickleness and Mutability of our Nature, nothing but the Fruits and Effects of Repentance can create in us an assurance that we are inwardly changed; and consequently they must needs die very uncomfortably, and in great doubt and anxiety of Mind what will be their Fate and Doom to all Eternity.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

Almighty and Everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the Sins of all them that are penitent; create and make in me a new and contrite Heart, that I, worthily lamenting my Sins, and acknowledging my Wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all Mercy, perfect Remission and Forgiveness, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, and Judge of all Men; I acknowledge and bewail my manifold

fold Sins and Wickedness, which I from time to time most grievously have committed in Thought, Word and Deed, against thy Divine Majesty, provoking most justly thy Wrath and Indignation against me. I do earnestly repent, and am heartily sorry for these my Mis-doings: The Remembrance of them is grievous unto me, the Burthen of them is intolerable: Have Mercy upon me, have Mercy upon me, most merciful Father, for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive me all that is past; and grant that I may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of Life, to the Honour and Glory of thy Name, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

III.

M^r Kettle-
well.

HAVING thus utterly renounced my Sins, O Holy Father! I desire above all things to partake of thy Righteousness, having utterly defaced and corrupted my self, I would gladly be new made by thee; having hitherto miscarried whilst I would be in my own Hands, I desire now to be altogether in thine. I loath my self, O my dear God! whilst I am without thee, and whatever else I lose, my earnest Prayer is, that I may recover thy Likeness, through Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

IV.

I Know, O Gracious Lord! that I cannot receive this, but from thy self; therefore be thou the blessed Giver and the Gift. I know also, alas, that I am utterly unworthy to have thy divine Image stampt upon my Soul; but I extreemly need it, and I extreemly value it; and such thou art pleased to account worthy of it.

Amen.

And I heartily love thee, O my God, or else I should not be thus desirous to be like thee. And thou lovest to communicate thy Goodness; and whom shouldst thou imprint and display it upon, but on those who love thee, and are earnestly desirous of the same. Hear me therefore, O my God! and breathe into my Heart *that Spirit, which renews me after thine own Image, in Righteousness and true Holiness.* Oh! thou who seekest out Sinners to make them good, do not reject me now, when I seek thee out to make me better. I am poor and naked, O fill me with thy Righteousness! My good Thoughts are unconstant and changeable, O fix them by thy Grace! Set up thy Kingdom, O Jesu, in my Heart! for to become thy faithful Servant, is more to me than to have the Empire of this World. Keep me stedfast, O Lord, in serving thee, till thou takest me finally to enjoy thee, through Jesus Christ, my Blessed Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

V.

Lord grant that at all times I may account my Sins, yea all my Sins, to be my Shame; and make thy Laws, yea all thy Laws, to be my Rule; and thy blessed Will to be in every thing my Choice and Satisfaction. Let thy Promises be my Hope, thy Providence my Guard, thy Grace my Strength, and thy blessed Self my Portion, both now and in the end, thro' Jesus Christ my Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

C H A P. III.

Ember Days in Lent.

Q. **W**hat are Ember Days?

A. Certain Days set apart for consecrating to God the four Seasons of the Year, and for the imploring of his Blessing by Fasting and Prayer upon the *Ordinations* performed in the Church at such Times. And this in Conformity to the Practice of the Apostles, who when

Acts 13. 3. they separated Persons for the Work of the Ministry, prayed and fasted before they laid on their Hands. It will become us therefore to address to Heaven at this time after the same manner, that God would be pleased so to govern the Minds of the Bishops, that they may admit none into *Holy Orders*, but such as are duly qualified for the Discharge of that sacred Function. And that those who shall be ordained to serve at the Altar, may by their exemplary Lives and zealous Labours turn many unto Righteousness.

Q. When are these Ember Days observed in the Church?

A. At the four Seasons of the Year, being the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, after the first Sunday in Lent, after Whitsunday, after the fourteenth of September, and after the thirteenth of December: It being appointed by a Canon of

Can. 31. the Church, *that Deacons and Ministers be ordained, or made but only upon the Sunday immediately following these Ember Fasts.*

Q. Why are these Fasts called Ember Days?

A. Some think they are so called from a German

man Word that imports *Abstinence*; others that they are derived from *Ember*, which signifies Ashes, and therefore are stiled *Ember Days*, because it was customary among the *Ancients* to accompany their Fastings with such Humiliations, as were exprest by sprinkling Ashes upon their Heads, or sitting in them; and when they broke their Fasts upon such Days, to eat only Cakes baked upon *Embers*, which was therefore called *Ember-Bread*. But Dr. *Mareschal's* Conjecture in Pag. 528, his Observations upon the *Saxon* Gospels, seems 529. to hit upon the true *Etymology*, which he derives from the *Saxon* Word, importing a *Circuit* or *Course*; so that these Fasts being not Occasional, but returning every Year in certain Courses, may properly be said to be *Ember Days*, because *Fasts* in *Course*.

Q. *Wherein consists the Piety of instituting these Days?*

A. The Ordination of fit Persons to serve in the sacred Ministry of God's Church, being of that vast Importance to the welfare of it; as well as the *Salvation* of those Souls that are Members of that Body; 'tis very necessary and fitting that all Christians, who are so much concerned in the Consequences of it, should use their best Endeavours to make it successful and efficacious; which cannot be better done than by the united Prayers and Fastings of Christians, which have always been esteemed an admirable method to procure God's Favour and Blessing upon such Occasions. Besides, the time of *Ordinations* being publicly stated, the People have the advantage and liberty of making their Objections, if they have any thing material to offer against the Candidates for *holy Orders*; a

Form of
Consec.

Privilege which the ancient Church always allowed, and is very much encouraged by the Church of England; who gives free leave to every Man to declare, if he knoweth any Impediment or Crime in any Persons presented to be Ordained; and calls upon them to come forth and shew the Crimes alledged.

Q. What Officers are established in the Christian Church?

Preface to
Form of
Consecrat.

A. The Church being a regular Society founded by Christ, distinct from and independent of all other Worldly Societies, must naturally make us suppose that he instituted some Officers for the Government of it. And it is evident to all Men, diligently reading holy Scripture and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles time, there hath been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; which Offices were evermore had in such reverent Estimation, that no Man by his own private Authority, might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried and examined, and known to have such Qualities, as were requisite for the same, and also by publick Prayers with Imposition of Hands approved and admitted thereunto. These Orders have all some spiritual Powers annext to their Office, tho' some in a greater degree and others in a less.

Form of
Consec.

Q. What is the Office of a Deacon?

A. "It pertaineth to the Office of a Deacon, "in the Church where he shall be appointed, to "assist the Priest in Divine Service, and espe- "cially when he ministreth the Holy Commu- "nion, and to help him in the Distribution "thereof, and to read the holy Scriptures and "Homilies"

“ Homilies in the Congregation, and to instruct
 “ the Youth in the Catechism, to baptize and
 “ to preach, if he be admitted thereto by the
 “ Bishop. And farthermore, it is his Office
 “ where Provision is so made, to search for the
 “ Sick, Poor and impotent People of the Parish,
 “ to intimate their Estates, Names, and Places
 “ where they dwell, unto the Curate, that by
 “ his Exhortation they may be relieved by the
 “ Parish, or other convenient Alms.

Q. Upon what Occasion was this Order instituted in the Church?

A. This Office had its Original from the murdering of the Grecians, who were probably Profelytes; Jews by Religion, and Gentiles by Descent; against the Hebrews, who were Jews both by Religion and Descent, that their Widows were neglected in the daily Ministration, when Believers had all things in common, and were supplied out of one Treasury. To prevent any Mismanagement for the future, the Apostles appoint seven Men of honest Report, full of the Holy Ghost and of Wisdom, to superintend the Necessities of the Poor, and to serve Tables, who were called Deacons.

Q. Does this serving of Tables only imply their Care of the Poor?

A. Besides the Care of the Poor, by their serving of Tables, was implied their peculiar Attendance at the Lord's Table. It being the Custom of Christians in those Times to meet every Day at the Lord's Table, where they made their Offerings for the Poor, and when Poor and Rich had their Meals together, consequently 'twas their Office to deliver the Sacramental Elements, when consecrated, to the People,

They had also Authority to preach and baptize, as appears from the Example of *Philip*, one of the seven; but they all along in the Primitive Church retained so much of the chief design of their Institution, that they took Care of the Churches Revenues under the *Bishops*, and distributed them as the *Bishop* and his College of *Presbyters* appointed.

Q. Was not this Office exercised, as some pretend, by Lay-men?

Can. Apost.
Sext.

A. The Solemnity that was used in setting *Deacons* apart for this Service, by Prayer and Imposition of Hands; and the Qualifications that *St. Paul* requires in a *Deacon*, almost the very same with those for a *Priest*, sufficiently prove this Degree to be an Ecclesiastical Office; nor would the Primitive Church have forbidden *Deacons*, as it certainly did, to have followed secular Employments, if they had been meer Lay-men?

Q. How long is it required that a Person shall remain in the degree of a Deacon?

A. "It is enjoyned by the Church, that a
" *Deacon* shall continue in that Office the space
" of a whole Year at the least (except for rea-
" sonable Causes it be otherwise seen to his Or-
" dinary) to the intent he may be perfect and
" well expert in the things pertaining to the
" Ecclesiastical Administration. In executing
" whereof, if he be found faithful and diligent,
" he may be admitted by his *Diocesan* to the
" Order of Priesthood. And 'tis to be wish'd
that this Rule was more particularly observed,
that those who aspire to the Priesthood might
give sufficient Proof of their Fitness for that
high Calling

Q. What

Q. *What Qualifications are required in a Deacon ?*

A. Chiefly that he be a Man of a sober and godly Conversation, edifying by his Example those Christians where he officiates ; and that he be endowed with such Measures of Learning as to be able at least to render an Account of his *Faith* in *Latin*, and confirm it with Testimonies out of the Holy Scripture ; especially he must be very conversant in those holy Books, which are the perfect Rule of *Faith* and *Manners*, necessary for the governing of his own Life, the Instruction of others, and the confuting of Gain-sayers. The Bishop ought to have a moral Assurance, partly by his own Knowledge, and partly by the Testimonials of credible Hands, that the Person presented is so qualified, and his *Arch-Deacon* after Trial and Examination professes, that he believes the Candidate so prepared.

Q. *What do you mean by an Arch-Deacon ?*

A. In great Churches where the Bishop had many *Deacons*, one among them had the Title of *Arch-Deacon*, who was a sort of Governour over all the rest ; to whom the *Bishop* committed some Authority to admonish and censure, as it should be found expedient, still reserving an Appeal to himself. The original Jurisdiction which of Right belonged to the Bishop, by degrees and mutual consent, was in part committed to the *Arch-Deacon* ; whose Jurisdiction is founded on immemorial Custom, in Subordination to the Bishop. And tho' for some time he was only of the Order of *Deacons*, yet afterwards it became common for such as were *Priests* to be chosen to that Office ; which consists

Hiero. Ep.
ad Evag.

sists in the inspecting the Lives and Behaviour of the Clergy; and in taking care the Churches and Chancels be kept in good repair; and that the Possessions and all other things belonging to God's House, be not embezel'd or damnify'd; particularly to try and examine those who shall be Candidates for Holy Orders. The Institution of *Archdeacons* is very ancient, and their Authority very considerable; and the due Execution of the Office contributes very much to the good Government of the Church.

Q. What is the Office of a Priest or Presbyter?

A. To teach and instruct the People committed to his Charge by the Bishop of the Diocese, in the whole Doctrine of Christianity, as contained in the Holy Scriptures. To administer the Sacraments and the Discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded. To oppose all such erroneous and strange Doctrines as are contrary to God's Word. To use both publick and private Admonitions and Exhortations, as well to the Sick as to the whole within his Cure, as need shall require, and occasion shall be given. To offer up the Prayers in the publick Assemblies. To maintain Quietness, and Peace, and Love among all Christian People, especially among those committed to his Charge. To fashion and frame himself and Family according to the Doctrine of Christ; and to make himself and them Examples to the Flock he feeds. To exercise all these Duties with Diligence and Fidelity, and to forsake and set aside (as much as may be) all Worldly Care and Studies; since the Employment of his Function is sufficient to engage all his Time and all his Thoughts. The Sacerdotal Powers none must undertake, but
such

such as have received their Commission from *Bishops*, who only have Authority to send Ministers into the Lord's Vineyard.

Q. What Qualifications are required in a Priest, or Minister of the Gospel, to enable him to discharge his Duty?

A. A thorough *Knowledge* of the whole Will of God, since it is the Priest's Lips must preserve Knowledge; and except they have it themselves, how can they communicate it to others? *Faithfulness* in the instruction of those that are committed to their Care; that they may deliver nothing for the Will of God but what is contained within the Bounds of their Commission, and that they may conceal nothing that is necessary for the People to believe and practise; and this tho' it contradicts the Prejudices of some, and the corrupt and worldly Maxims of others. For by this particular Application to the Consciences of Men according to their Wants and Necessities, it will be plain they consult not so much what will please them, as what will do them good. Great *Prudence* in all their Conduct, which tho' it will not permit them to neglect any part of their Duty, yet it implies the performing it in such a manner as may render Instructions and Persuasions most effectual, by taking the most convenient Seasons, and teaching Things of present Use; and by avoiding all unnecessary Provocations. A Faithful Servant does what he is commanded, and a Wise Servant does it in the most effectual manner.

Q. What Care has the Church of England taken, that unfit Persons should not be admitted to Holy Orders?

A. Besides the solemn Profession of the Candidates

Can. 34.

didates in the Presence of God, that they think themselves *truly called according to the Will of our Lord Jesus Christ*, the Church requires that the Bishops be well assured either by their own Knowledge, or by the Testimonials of credible Persons, that the *Candidates* be Men of good Lives, and free from all noted Crimes, as well as of sufficient Learning for the discharge of their Office. To this end 'tis wisely enjoyned, that the Candidates shall bring sufficient Testimonials of their sober Life, from such as have known and lived near them for three Years before. Moreover they are to undergo the Trial and Examination of the *Arch-Deacon*; who is to assure the *Bishop* he thinks them apt and meet, both for *Learning* and *godly Conversation*. And yet to prevent any scandalous Intruders, the *Bishop* before he gives them their Commission, makes a publick Application to the Congregation, to enquire whether they know any Impediment, why the Persons presented should not be ordained; and if any Crime is objected against any one, the *Bishop* is to delay giving him *Orders* till he has cleared himself. And as a farther Security in this matter, if a *Bishop* shall be convicted of any culpable neglect in admitting Candidates, he shall be suspended by the *Arch-bishop* of the *Province* from conferring Orders for two Years. 'Tis to be heartily wish'd, that all Persons concerned would be very conscientious in signing Testimonials, that this admirable Method might not be render'd ineffectual, by an ill-timed Complaisance; for which they must severely answer at the dreadful Tribunal of God, since eminent Hands may mislead a Bishop, the best disposed to do his Office,

Can. 35.

Q. What

Q. *What is the Office of a Bishop?*

A. The Office of a *Bishop* contains and includes in it all the *Sacerdotal Powers*, and by consequence the Powers of the inferior Orders; as to dispose of the Church's Alms, to preach, to pray, to administer the holy Sacraments, and absolve Penitents. And moreover contains peculiarly the Power of *consecrating* Bishops to succeed in vacant Sees, and of *ordaining* those inferior Officers, *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, and of *confirming* those that renew the solemn Vow that was made in their Names at their Baptism. It has the inherent Right of administering the Censures of the Church, and the Power of ruling and governing it, and providing for its welfare by good Laws.

Q. *How were the Bishops called in the Apostolical Age?*

A. Those whom we now call *Bishops*, were Euseb. lib. 1. c. 12. in the first Age of the Church stiled *Apostles*, Phil. 2. 25. and by St. *John* in the *Revelation*, Angels. And 2 Cor. 8. 23. the words *Bishop* and *Presbyter* in the same Age were used often promiscuously to denominate the same Order; and generally that which we now call the Order of *Priests*. But in the succeeding Age, and that while St. *John* was alive, the Governours of the Church abstained from the Name of *Apostles*, and were contented with that of *Bishops*; and then the second Order were called altogether *Presbyters*. And that the Title of *Bishop* was appropriated thence forward to those that had the Power of *Ordaining*, *Confirming* and *Governing*, is plain from the Ecclesiastical Writers of that Age. So that 'tis not so much the Name as the distinct Powers which are contended for; of which there will be

be an account given on the next Season of these *Ember-Fasts*.

Q. *What do you mean by an Arch-Bishop?*

A. When Christianity began to spread over the Provinces of the *Roman Empire*, the *Bishops* of lesser Cities were subordinate to those of the greater, after the method of the Civil Government; which chief Bishop was originally stiled the *first Bishop* or *Primate*, and in the following Ages *Metropolitan* and *Arch-Bishop*; who was not superiour to other Bishops in Order, but only in Jurisdiction. All learned Men agree that *Metropolitans* were of very great *Antiquity*; and some of an eminent Character have thought them of *Apostolical* Institution, and that *Timothy* and *Titus* were such. The Privileges that belong to these chief Governours of the Church, are to confirm the Elections and Consecrations of all *Bishops* in their *Provinces*; to summon the *Bishops* of their *Provinces* to hold *Synods* under them, to inquire into the Manners and Opinions of the Bishops under their Jurisdiction, and to censure with Suspension or Deprivation, according to the Heinousness of the Crime; and lastly, to hear and determine Causes between contending Bishops, and to interpose their Authority in all Affairs of their Provinces which are of great moment.

Q. *What Solemnity was anciently used in admitting Men into holy Orders?*

A. According to primitive Practice Men were admitted Officers in the Church of Christ by *Fasting*, *Prayer*, and *Imposition of Hands*. Our Saviour directed his Disciples to pray, immediately before he created them Apostles; and does himself retire to address to Heaven for Success

Mat. 9. 38.
10. 1.

Success in a matter such of great Importance. In this manner did the Apostles convey the Acts 6. 6. Spiritual Powers they received from their Ma- 12. 2, 2. ster; and the Custom was observed regularly 1 Tim. 4. in the succeeding Ages of the Church; neither 14. is it reasonable that Men should be admitted to so honourable an Office as the care of Souls, without some solemn Investiture, when no Office of Trust is conveyed without some Form of Creation.

Q. What may we learn from the Institution of these several Orders in Christ's Church?

A. To be thankful to God for his great Goodness in establishing such Orders of Men on purpose to transact with us in his Name the momentous Affair of our eternal Salvation. To continue steadfast in the Communion of a Church, which is so conformable to the ancient Model for Discipline as well as Doctrine. To obey those that have the Rule over us, as those that watch for our Souls. To observe those pious Regulations, which our Spiritual Governours shall from time to time enjoin for the building us up in our holy Faith. To spend these fasting Days in Devotion and Retirement, with particular Intercessions for all Orders of the Clergy; that the Bishops may lay Hands suddenly on no Man, and may be eminent for their Piety and Charity; that they may govern with Justice and Equity; and shew great Gentleness and Moderation in their Behaviour towards all Men; that all they who engage in any holy Function, may have a due Regard to the great Ends for which it was instituted, and that they may be furnish'd with all those Abilities which are necessary for the Discharge of their Ministry.

The

The PRAYERS.

I.

Almighty God our Heavenly Father, who hast purchased to thy self an universal Church, by the precious Blood of thy dear Son: Mercifully look upon the same, and at this time so guide and govern the Minds of thy Servants, the Bishops and Pastors of thy Flock, that they may lay Hands suddenly on no Man, but faithfully and wisely make Choice of fit Persons to serve in the sacred Ministry of thy Church. And to those which shall be ordained to any holy Function, give thy Grace and heavenly Benediction, that both by their Life and Doctrine, they may set forth thy Glory and set forward the Salvation of all Men, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

Almighty God, giver of all good Things, who of thy great Goodness dost vouchsafe at this time to call several, of thy Servants to the Offices of *Deacons* in thy Church: Make them, I beseech thee, O Lord, to be modest, humble, and constant in their Ministration, to have a ready Will to observe all Spiritual Discipline; that they having always the Testimony of a good Conscience, and continuing ever stable and strong in thy Son Christ, may so well behave themselves in this inferiour Office, that they may be found worthy to be called unto the higher Ministeries in thy Church, through the same thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; to whom

whom be Glory and Honour, World without end. *Amen.*

III.

Almighty God, Giver of all good things, who by thy Holy Spirit hast appointed divers Orders of Ministers in the Church; Mercifully behold thy Servants now to be called to the Office of *Priesthood*, and replenish them so with the Truth of thy Doctrine, and Innocency of Life, that both by Word and good Example, they may faithfully serve thee in this Office, to the Glory of thy Name, and the good of thy Church, thro' the Merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, World without end. *Amen.*

IV.

GRant, O Lord, that all those who dedicate themselves to the Service of the Altar, may be inwardly moved by thy holy Spirit to take upon them that sacred Ministration; that their Consciences may testify to them, that by engaging in this holy Calling, their chief design is to serve thee, promote thy Glory, and edify thy People; that they may neither be led by Ambition nor Covetousness; that neither the Honours nor the Revenues that are annex'd to this Profession, may have any competition in their Minds with a mighty Zeal for thy Glory, and a desire to promote the Salvation of Souls. To this end, O Lord, grant that they may make thy holy Writ the chief Subject of all their Studies, that they may from thence instruct thy People committed to their Charge, and silence Gainsayers; that they may faithfully and diligently

gently administer thy Holy Sacraments; that they may labour in Season and out of Season, by private and publick Admonitions and Exhortations; that they may maintain Peace and Love among all Christians, and frame themselves and their Families according to the Precepts of thy holy Gospel. Give them the Will, O Lord, to do their Duty, and Strength and Power faithfully to perform the same, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

C H A P. IV.

Good-Friday.

Q. *What Fast does the Church this Day observe?*

A. That of our Saviour's Passion, commonly called *Good-Friday*.

Q. *Why is this Day called Good-Friday?*

A. From the blessed *Effects* of our Saviour's Sufferings; which are the Ground of all our Joy; and from those unspeakable good things he has purchased for us by his Death; whereby the *blessed Jesus* made Expiation for the Sins of the whole World, and by the shedding of his own Blood obtained eternal Redemption for us.

Heb. 9. 12.

Q. *Why is the Commemoration of our Saviour's Sufferings observed as a Day of Fasting and Humiliation?*

A. Because at this time we properly consider our Saviour's Passion, with respect to the cause

cause of it ; and therefore must needs own it to be matter of the greatest Sorrow and Humiliation, since they were the Sins of Mankind that drew upon him that painful and shameful Death of the Cross. And in this manner, and with this Prospect, the Memory of his Sufferings has been kept from the first Age of Christianity ; not that the Grief and Affliction they then expressed, did arise from the loss they sustained, nor from any Indignation against our Saviour's mortal Persecutors ; but from a Sense of the Guilt of the Sins of the whole World, for which our Lord had this Day suffered.

Q. *How was this whole Week called in the Primitive Church ?*

A. The *Great* and the *Holy Week* ; because in this Week was transacted an Affair of the greatest Importance to the Happiness of sinful Man ; and Actions truly great were performed to secure his Salvation ; *Death was conquered*, Heb. 2. 14; the *Devil's Tyranny was abolished*, the *Partition Wall* betwixt *Jew* and *Gentile* was broken down, and *God* and *Man* were *reconciled*. And it was called *Holy*, from those devout Exercises which Christians employed themselves in upon this Occasion. And several of the Christian Emperors, to shew what Veneration they had for this *holy Season*, caused all Law Suits to cease, and Tribunal Doors to be shut up, and Prisoners to be set free. And 'tis to be hoped that *Good-Friday* may retrieve the ancient Reverence that was paid to it, since Authority has so worthily required it to be observed as a day of

Dd 2

Devotion, *This was done last Year, when*

the Day was religiously observed throughout the whole City of London, by shutting up of Shops, and by attending the publick Assemblies;

Devotion, and sequestred from all worldly Business. And surely, no good Christian that is ready to celebrate any other *Fast*, enjoyned upon the Occasion of temporal Calamities, will refuse to joyn in Humiliation, assigned for much more weighty spiritual Reasons, for the saving immortal Souls, and the averting eternal Vengeance.

Q. How was this Week observed in the Primitive Church?

Dionys.
Alex.

A. With great strictness of *Fasting* and Humiliation. Some abstained from Food the whole *six Days*, some *four*, some *three*, and those that did least, *two*; which were *Good-Friday*, and the Day following. They applyed themselves to Prayer both in publick and private, to hearing and reading God's holy Word, and exercising a most solemn Repentance for those Sins which crucified the Lord of Life. Thus with abhorrence of Sin, and penitential Grief did they celebrate the Memory of our Saviour's Sufferings.

Q. What Provision has the Church of England made, to exercise the Devotion of her Members all this Week?

A. She calls all her devout Members every Day this Week to meditate upon our Lord's Sufferings; having collected in her *Offices* most of those Portions of Scripture that relate to this tragical Subject; increasing their Humiliation, by the Consideration of our Saviour's: That with penitent Hearts, and firm Resolutions of dying likewise to Sin, they may attend their Saviour through the several Stages of his bitter Passion. And by encouraging a prudent Abstinence from innocent Pleasures, and the Cares of worldly Business, as well as from the common Liberties

Liberties of Food, she directs their Thoughts and Affections to the serious Consideration of such things as concern their eternal Salvation; That by reflecting upon the Guilt of their Sins, and disposing their Minds to an abhorrence of them, they may be qualified for the Benefit of our *Saviour's Expiation*.

Q. Who was it that this day suffered?

A. Jesus Christ, the *eternal Son of God*; begotten of his Father before all Worlds, God of God, very God of very God; the *Prince of Glory*, the *Heir of everlasting Bliss*, the *promised Messiah*; who took upon him the Nature of Man, and in that Nature being still the same Person he was before, did suffer for our Salvation; for the Princes of this World crucified the *Lord of Glory*, and God purchased his Church I Cor. 2. 8.
with his own Blood. Acts 20. 28.

Q. What was it our Saviour suffered?

A. When the Blessed Jesus took upon him Humane Nature, he was subject to all those Frailties and Infirmities those outward Injuries and violent Impressions to which Mortality is liable; his whole Life was full of Sufferings, from his Birth in the Stable, to his Death upon the Cross; but particularly in his last bitter Passion, he suffered most exquisite Pains and Torments in his Body; and inexpressible Fears and Sorrows and unknown Anguish in his Soul.

Q. What did our Saviour suffer in his Body?

A. He was betrayed by *Judas* and denied by *Peter*, both his own Disciples. He was apprehended and bound by the rude Soldiers as a *Malefactor*; accused by false Witnesses, arraigned and condemned. He was buffeted, scourged and spit upon, derided and mocked by the People. Mat. 26. c. 27.

ple, the Soldiers, and at last by the High-Priest. He was made the Scorn and Contempt and Sport of his insolent and insulting Enemies; was worried to Death by the Clamours of the Rabble, that cried out, *crucifie, crucifie him*. And accordingly he was nailed to the Cross, on which after having hung several Hours, he gave up the Ghost; a Death of utmost Shame and Ignominy, as well as of Torment insupportable.

Q. What was the Nature of Crucifixion?

A. It was a *Roman* Punishment remarkable for the exquisite Pains and Ignominy of it; being the most painful and the most shameful of all their ways of dispatching Criminals. The Body was laid upon a piece of Wood afterwards erected and fixed in the Earth, and the Hands nailed to a transverse Beam fastned unto that, towards the top thereof; and the Body rested upon another piece of Wood, fixed into that which was erected, towards the lower part. The Torment of it appeared from the piercing those parts of the Body with Nails, which are most nervous, and yet did not quickly procure Death; and the Shame of it was evident from those upon whom it was inflicted, being only Slaves and Fugitives. But when the *Roman Emperors* became Christians this Punishment was forbidden out of a due Respect and pious Honour to the manner of *Christ's* Death.

Q. How does it appear that our Saviour suffered in his Mind?

A. From those grievous Agonies he felt, first *Mat. 26. 38.* in the Garden of *Gethsemane*, just before his Apprehension, when his Soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death, when he sweat as it were drops of Blood, and prayed thrice

with

with great Vehemence to his Father, that if it were possible that bitter Cup might pass from him. And from that unconceivable Anguish which he expressed upon the Cross, when he broke out into that passionate Exclamation, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* So that Evil to come tormented his Soul with Fear, and Evil present with Sadness, Sorrow and Anguish. Mat. 27.46.

Q. Did our Saviour suffer the Torments of the Damned?

A. 'Tis certain the Damned are the Objects of God's Wrath; and will remain so to all Eternity; but our Saviour in *laying down his Life* did an act highly agreeable to God, and for which the Father loved him; and whatever he suffered was not of long Duration, in that he rose from the *Dead the third Day*. And tho' he is said to be a Curse for us, 'tis only upon the account of that accursed Death which he suffered. And being thus highly obedient to his Father, and putting his Confidence in God, in the bitterest part of his Passion, by his *Resignation in the Garden*, and by *recommending his Spirit* into the Hands of his Father, upon the Cross, he did not despair of God's Mercy, which inseparably attends all those Torments the Damned endure. Joh. 10.37.
1 Cor. 15.7.
Mat. 26.42.
Luk. 23.46.

Q. Whence then proceeded that Horror and Dread which seized our Saviour upon the Approach of his Passion?

A. 'Tis not reasonable to believe that this Horror and Dread proceeded only from the Prospect of Death; because *Martyrs* have embraced it with Joy as well as Resignation, when attended with grievous Circumstances of Cruelty. There-

fore some have thought the Devil exerted all his Power and Malice to distract and afflict our Saviour with dismal Apprehensions and horrid Phantasms, and that it was this Conflict with the Powers of Hell, which caused his inexpressible Anguish. And this Notion has some Countenance from our Saviour's calling the season of his Passion, *the Power of Darkness*. But if we consider how perfectly the blessed Jesus understood the Evil and Guilt of Sin, how zealous he was of God's Glory, how desirous of the Salvation of Mankind, and yet withall that he knew how small a Number would be saved, how an ungrateful and rebellious World would frustrate the end of his Death, and the designs of his Mercy, we may in some measure guess at that Anguish that sunk and depressed him in such a wonderful manner. For we may imagine how much he, who loved us so well as to die to redeem us, might be grieved and afflicted, when he foresaw that even by his dying he should not save us all.

Q. For what Reason did our Saviour suffer the painful and shameful Death of the Cross?

A. To deliver us from the Wrath to come,
 1 Thes. 1. and to purchase *eternal Redemption* for us; and
 10. to give us a perfect pattern of Patience and Re-
 Heb. 9. 12. signation to the Will of God; and of all those
 Christian Vertues which are necessary to qualifie
 1 Pet. 2. 21. us to receive the benefit of his Expiation, *leaving*
us an example that we should follow his steps.
 For when by our Sins we had justly incurred the
 Displeasure of Almighty God, and were liable
 to eternal Misery, our blessed Saviour discharg-
 ed the Obligation, and by shedding his most
 Mat. 20. 28. precious Blood as the *Price of our Redemption,*
 made

made Satisfaction to God for us: He was contented to be substituted as a Sacrifice for us, to *bear our Sins in his own Body on the Tree*; and ^{1 Pet. 2. 24.} to expiate the Guilt of our Offences by his own Sufferings. He died not only for our Benefit and Advantage, but in our Place and Stead; so that if he had not died, we had eternally perished. And the Blood of Christ, which was shed for us upon the Cross, is called the *Blood of the* ^{Heb. 10. 29.} *Covenant*; because thereupon God was pleased ^{13. 20.} to enter into a Covenant of Grace and Mercy with Mankind, wherein he hath promised and engaged for the sake of Christ's Sufferings, voluntarily undergone upon our account and in our stead, to forgive the Sins of all those that sincerely repent and believe, and to make them Partakers of Eternal Life.

Q. But this being matter of Revelation, what Scriptures prove this important Article?

A. St. Matthew tells us, that the Son of Man ^{Mat. 20. 28.} *came not to be minister'd unto, but to minister, and give his Life a Ransom for many. That his* ^{26. 28.} *Blood is shed for many, for the Remission of Sins.* In *St. John* our Saviour is called the *Good Shep-* ^{Joh. 10. 11.} *herd, that lays down his Life for the Sheep.* *St. Paul* delivers this Doctrine clearly in most of his Epistles; That *in due time Christ died* ^{Rom. 5. 6.} *for the Ungodly*; That *he died for our Sins ac-* ^{1 Cor. 5. 3.} *cording to the Scriptures*; That *by the Grace* ^{Heb. 2. 9.} *of God, he should taste Death for every Man.* Particularly in the 9th of the *Hebrews*, this matter is largely treated of. *St. Peter* says, That ^{1 Pet. 1. 18.} *we are not redeemed with corruptible things, &c. but with the precious Blood of Christ.* *St. John,* That *Jesus Christ is the Propitiation for our* ^{1 John 8.} *Sins; and not for ours only, but for the Sins*
of

1 Joh. 3. 16. *of the whole World. Hereby perceive we the Love of God, because he laid down his Life for*
 Rev. 5. 9. *us. Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation. Many other Proofs might be brought, but these Texts make the Reason of our Saviour's Death plain and evident; and they that can evade the force of them, may by the like Evasions overthrow any other Principle of Religion plainly laid down in the Scriptures.*

Q. But is it just for an Innocent Person to suffer for the Guilty?

A. If the Party offended be willing to accept of the Commutation, and the Party that suffers does it voluntarily; there can be no Injustice that one should suffer in another's stead, and make satisfaction for the Crimes and Faults another has committed, because the innocent Person having a free Disposal of himself, may freely offer his own Life or Liberty in exchange for the forfeited Life of another, and the Judge if he think fit may accept it.

Q. How does it appear, that the promised Messiah was thus to suffer?

Chap. 53. *A. The Prophet Isaiah represents the Messiah that was to come, as a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief, oppressed and afflicted, wounded and bruised, brought to the Slaughter, and cut off out of the Land of the Living. That he was number'd with the Transgressors. And that the Messiah is treated of in this Chapter, appears not only from the genuine Sense of the place, but from the Confession of the most ancient Jews. The Prophet Zachary foretels the*
 Zac. 11. 12. *Price for which he was to be betray'd, Thirty pieces*

pieces of Silver. And that they should look on him whom they pierced. The Prophet David more particularly, that they should pierce his Hands and his Feet. Which Predictions agree with the Historical Account we have in the Evangelists, of the Sufferings of the Blessed Jesus, who did constantly instruct his Apostles in this Truth, not only that they might expect it, but that they might be thereby confirmed that he was the true Messias; and St. Paul makes it a part of his Preaching, that Christ must needs have suffered. Zac. 12. 10. Pſal. 22. 16. Acts 17. 3.

Q. How was the Sacrifice of our Saviour typified under the Law?

A. Moses in the Institution of the Passover, where the Paschal Lamb was to be slain, pointed at the Lamb slain before the Foundations of the World. When the Braſen Serpent was set up in the Wilderness, it declared that the Son of Man should be lifted up upon the Cross. All the Sacrifices for Sin proclaimed, that without Effusion of Blood there was no Remission. But the great Type was the Day of Expiation and Atonement, enjoined by God under a great Penalty, and observed with a proportionable Exactness both by the High-Priest and the People. 'Twas on this Day alone the High-Priest went by himself into the Holy of Holies, and besides the Propitiation he was to make for himself and his House, he made an Atonement for the People, by two Kids of the Goats for a Sin-Offering, which he presented before the Lord at the Door of the Tabernacle; where by Lots was determined, which was to be offered, and which was to be the Scape-Goat; with the Blood of that which was offered he sprinkled the Mercy-Seat, Exod. 12. 3. Num. 21. 9. Heb. 9. 22. Levit. 16.

Seal, on the other he laid both his Hands, and confessed over him the Sins of the People, putting them upon the Head of the Goat, and sent him away by the Hand of a fit Man into the Wilderness. And thus the Apostle in his Epistle to the *Hebrews* represents our Saviour to have been our *High-Priest*, and on his Passion-Day to have offered the *Sacrifice of himself*, to have born our *Sins in his own Body*, and with his own Blood to have entered into the *holy Place*, not made with Hands; and to have appeared as before the Mercy-Seat in the *Presence of God* for us.

Heb. 2. 17.
9. 14.
26.
24.

Q. How was this Day of Atonement observed among the People?

A. While the *Expiation* was making in the Temple at *Jerusalem*, the *Jews* wherever they resided, fasted the whole Day, and afflicted their Souls from Evening to Evening; and whatever Soul it was that was not afflicted in that same Day, he should be cut off from among his People. And this Affliction of their Souls was not only by *Fasting*, but by all other Demonstrations of Grief and Abhorrence of their Sins. They watched most part of the preceding Night, which they spent in Prayer; early before Sun-rising they met in their *Synagogues*, and pass'd the Day in publick Exercises of Devotion, they were dismiss'd with the solemn Benediction of the Priests that were present. And except the Day was employed after this manner, they were not to expect any Benefit from the Sacrifice which was then offered.

Buxr. Syn.
Jud. c. 25.

Q. Did the Practice of any Christians upon Good-Friday bear any Conformity with that of the Jews upon their Day of Atonement.

A. In

A. In the *Western Church* on *Good-Friday*, the holy *Priests* made our Saviour's *Sufferings* the Subject of their Discourses to the People, Conc. Tolet. 4. c. 6, 7. whom they instructed upon that Occasion in the *Mysteries* of our *Redemption*; and all the People, except such as were excused by Age or Sickness, were bound to fast the whole Day, till the *Priest* towards Evening with a loud Voice did proclaim publick Absolution; and this upon the Penalty of being excluded from the *Lord's Table* at *Easter*. The Design whereof was, that by this outward Testimony of their true Repentance for their Sins, and by the benefit of Priestly Absolution, they might be the better fitted to solemnize the *Grand Festival* of our Saviour's *Resurrection*, and to eat the *Christian Passover*.

Q. But our *Messias* being God as well as Man, how could he suffer; since the *Divine Nature* is not subject to any sense of *Misery*?

A. Our *Blessed Saviour* suffered only in his *Humane Nature*, that Nature of Man which he took upon him; but since it was united to the *Divine Nature*, and that there was a most intimate Conjunction of both Natures in the Person of the Son, there did from thence result a true proper Communication of Names, Characters and Properties; so that the very *Eternal Son of God*, may rightly be said to have suffered whatsoever the *Man Christ Jesus* endured in the *Flesh* for Sinners; because the Properties of each Nature separate, may reasonably be affirmed of that Person in whom the two Natures are united.

Q. What may we learn from the Commemoration of *Christ's Sufferings*?

A. The great Evil of Sin, which we are apt to make so slight of, and yet God incarnate was made

made a Sacrifice to deliver us from the Guilt of it. The infinite Love of our dear Redeemer, who suffer'd such bitter Torments and inexpressible Anguish, to purchase Eternal Salvation for us. That the good things of this Life are not so valuable, nor the Evils of it so considerable as we are apt to imagine, when the best Man that ever lived was so destitute of the common Comforts and Conveniencies of Humane Life, and shared so largely in the Afflictions and Sufferings of it. That the Favour of God is not to be measured by outward Prosperity in this World, nor his Wrath and Indignation to be concluded from temporal Afflictions, since the greatest Sufferer that ever was, was the dearly beloved Son of God. To testify the Power of Christ's Death, by crucifying the old Man, and destroying the whole Body of Sin; not glorying, save in the Cross of Christ, by which the World is crucified unto us, and we unto the World. To bear the Calamities of this Life with Patience and Resignation to the Will of God, and not to murmur and repine that we suffer what we have so highly deserved, when our Saviour, who was perfectly innocent, endured much greater upon our account. Not to despond under the sharpest Trials, from a Sense of our own Weakness, because our Saviour has purchas'd for us the Gift of his Holy Spirit, a most powerful Principle of Resolution; and is himself touch'd with a feeling of our Infirmities, having been in all Points tempted like as we are, yet without Sin. To make all the Returns we are able of Love and Gratitude. To sacrifice all that is dear to us for the Defence of his Truth, and the Propagation of his Glory and Honour in the World. To extend

tend our Charity to all Mankind, our Enemies as well as Friends; for while we were Enemies to God, Christ died to obtain Peace and Reconciliation for us.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

A Almighty God, I beseech thee graciously to look upon thy Family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed, and given up into the Hands of wicked Men, and to suffer Death upon the Cross; and receive, I humbly beseech thee, the Supplications and Prayers I offer before thee for all Estates of Men in thy Holy Church; that every Member of the same, in his Vocation and Ministry, may truly and Godly serve thee, thro' our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who now liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, World without end. *Amen.*

II.

A Almighty and Everlasting God, who of thy tender Love towards Mankind hast sent thy Son our Saviour, Jesus Christ, to take upon him our Flesh, and to suffer Death upon the Cross, that all Mankind should follow the Example of his great Humility: Mercifully grant that I may both follow the Example of his Patience, and also be made Partaker of his Resurrection, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

III. O

III.

O Merciful God, who hast made all Men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor would'st the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live: Have Mercy upon all *Jews, Turks, Infidels and Hereticks*, and take from them all Ignorance, Hardness of Heart, and Contempt of thy Word; and so fetch them Home, blessed Lord, to thy Flock, that they may be saved among the Remnant of the true *Israelites*, and be made one Fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, World without end. *Amen.*

IV.

B^p Ken.

O Thou my crucified Saviour, Glory be to thee for causing thy Sufferings to be registred in the Gospel, there I have read and remember the Wonders and Triumphs of thy Almighty Love, for which I will always adore and praise thee.

I remember, O Gracious Lord, how thou who thoughtest it no Robbery to be equal with God, wast made in the fashion of frail Man, of the vilest and most contemptible of Men; for thou tookest on thee the form of a very Servant; I remember how many Reproaches and Contradictions, Blasphemies and Persecutions, thou didst endure from a wicked and perverse Generation, and all this to save us sinful Men.

I remember, O gracious Lord, how thou didst endure a most bitter Agony; and didst sweat as it were great Drops of Blood, falling to the Ground; how thou who art God above all, blessed for ever, wast treacherously betrayed and apprehended

prehended and bound as a Malefactor, set at nought by *Herod* and his Men of War, denied by *Peter*, forsaken by all thy Disciples; and all this to save us sinful Men.

I remember how thou, O God of Truth, wast accused by false Witnesses; how thou, whom all the Angels adore, wast blindfolded and buffeted, mockt and spit upon, stript naked and scourged; and all this that we might be healed by thy Stripes, and to save us sinful Men.

I remember, Lord, how thou that art the great Judge of Heaven and Earth, wast thy self dragg'd to the Judgment-Seat and condemned; how thou, O King of Heaven, was crown'd with Thorns, and oppress'd with the weight of thy own Cross; and all this to save us sinful Men.

I remember, O blessed Saviour, how thou who art the Lord of Glory, and the sole Author of Life, wast put to a most ignominious Death; how thy Hands and thy Feet were nailed to a Cross; how thou wast crucified between two Thieves, and numbered with the Transgressors; how thou hadst a Potion given thee, to imbitter thy very last Gasps; and all this to save us sinful Men.

I remember, O gracious Lord, how when thou wert hanging on the very Cross, thou wast scoffed at and reviled; how infinitely then thou wast afflicted and bruised for our Transgressions; when the Iniquities of us all were laid on thy Shoulders; how thou didst then express an Anguish greater than all the Torments of thy Crucifixion, when thou didst cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* and how thou didst at last give up the Ghost, and die thy self, that we might live.

Was there ever any Sorrow like that which my Lord and my God endured for me? Was there any Love like to that Love, my Lord and my God has shewed to me? O my Saviour, with all my Heart, I love and adore thy infinite Love and Bignity to Sinners; with all my Heart, I lament and detest the Hatred and Outrage of Sinners to thee. Infil, O my God, penitential Love into my Soul, that I may grieve for my Sins, which grieved thee; that I may love thee for suffering for us Sinners, who occasioned all thy Griefs. O may I always love thee! O may I never grieve thee more! By the Love of thy Cross, O Jesus, I live; in that I will only glory, that above all things will I study, that above all things will I value; by the Love of thy Cross I will take up my Cross daily, and follow thee; I will persecute and torment and crucifie my sinful Affections and Lusts, which persecuted, tormented and crucified thee; and if thy Love calls me to it, I will suffer on the Cross for thee, as thou hast done for me.

How illustrious and amiable were thy Graces amidst all thy Sufferings! O thou afflicted Jesu! I admire and love thy profound Humility, unwearied Patience, Lamb-like Meekness, immaculate Innocence, invincible Courage, absolute Resignation, compassionate Love of Souls, and perfect Charity to thy Enemies. Give me Grace to tread in thy Steps, and conform me to thy Divine Image; that the more I grow like thee, the more I may love thee, and the more I may be loved by thee. Amen, Lord Jesus, Amen.

C H A P. V.

Easter Eve.

Q. **W**hat Fast does the Church this Day celebrate?

A. The great *Vigil* of our Saviour's Resurrection, when he lay in the Grave, and descended into the state of the Dead, when there was a real separation of his Soul from his Body, whereby he was properly and truly dead: Which state of his lowest Humiliation the Primitive Church always observed with rigorous Fasting, even in that Age when *Saturday* was otherwise kept as a Festival, and in respect to the *Jewish* Converts, honoured with all the Solemnities of Religion, over all the *Eastern* Church, as well as in some parts of the *Western*.

Q. How was Christ buried?

A. According to what was predicted concern- Isai. 53. 9.
ing the *Messias*, our Saviour made *his* Grave with the Rich; for *Joseph of Arimathea*, a rich Man, who was himself a Disciple of the Blessed *Jesus*, begged the Body from *Pilate*, and wrapt Mat. 27. 57, &c.
it in a Linen Cloth, and put it in his own new Tomb which he had hewn out in the Rock; which was shut up with a great Stone, and made secure by the *Jews*, by sealing the Stone, and setting a Watch. All these Circumstances do not only manifest the Reality of our Saviour's Death, but tend to make his Resurrection more evident.

Q. How did the Ancient Church observe this Vigil?

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A. 'Twas

A. 'Twas celebrated with more than ordinary Pomp, as *Nazianzen* relates, with solemn Watchings, with multitudes of lighted Torches both in their Churches and their own private Houses, and with the general Resort and Confluence of all Ranks of Men, both Magistrates and People. At *Constantinople*, *Eusebius* tells us, 'twas observed with most magnificent Illuminations, not only within the Churches but without. All over the City there were set up lighted Tapers, or rather Pillars of Wax, which gloriously turned the Night into Day. Which they designed as a Fore-runner of that great Light, even the *Sun of Righteousness*, which the next Day arose upon the World.

Euseb. vit. Const. lib. 4. c. 22.

Q. *How were the Christians employed upon this Vigil?*

A. As the Day was a strict Fast, so the Vigil continued at least till Midnight, the Congregation not being dismiss'd till that time; it being the Tradition of the Church, that our Saviour rose a little after Midnight; but in the East the Vigil lasted till the Cock-crowing, the time being spent, say the *Apostolical Constitutions*, in reading the Law and the Prophets, in expounding the Holy Scriptures, and in baptizing the *Catechumens*. In the Latin Church the Water for the Font is blest on this Day, and reserved for the use of the Persons to be baptized the Year following; which Custom is a shadow of the Ancient Usage; for on *Easter Eve* were the *Catechumens* baptized by the Bishop himself, if present; *Easter* being one of the chiefest Times appointed by the Church for baptizing Adult Converts, Children and sick Persons being baptized at all Times.

Hiero. in Mat. c. 25. Const. Ap. l. 5. c. 15, 19.

Ib. c. 14. 17, 18.

Rupert de Div. Offic. c. 35.

Q. *Must*

Q. Must we pass through the Gate of Death before we can attain that Happiness Christ has purchased for us?

A. It is appointed for all Men once to die; and though our Blessed *Saviour* has conquered Death, in depriving it of its Power to hurt those that are his faithful Servants, yet he has not exempted us from the Laws of Mortality, but has made Death a necessary Passage to the Attainment of Eternal Happiness.

Q. What ought then to be the great Concern of a serious Christian?

A. To fit and prepare himself for a holy and happy Death; in which he ought to use the greater Care and Caution, because a Mistake in this matter is irrecoverable, and never to be retrieved. We can die but once, and Eternal Happiness or Eternal Misery must be the Consequence of it. And happy is that Man whose Mind is so well fortified, as to be able to meet the *King of Terrors*, not only without Fear, but with some degree of Comfort and Satisfaction.

Q. Wherein appears the Wisdom of preparing our selves for a happy Death?

A. In that it is securing the *mighty* and important *Business* for which we were sent into this World, in respect of which all the other *Labours* of Life are meer *Trifles*. For to bestow our chief Care and Pains upon Matters of the greatest Consequence was always esteemed a main Point of *Wisdom* and *Prudence*, and a *Neglect* of this Kind is justly branded with the Character of the utmost *Folly*. Since therefore *Death* will certainly translate us to endless *Joys* or everlasting *Torments*, nothing can be wiser than to take such Measures as may secure the one and prevent the

other. This Method will give the truest relish to all the *Blessings of Life*, and prove the best Preservative against the *Terrors and Apprehensions* of our great Change, the anxious Fears whereof proceed not so much from Death it self, as from the Consequences of that *unchangeable State* in which it fixes us; and tho' *Reason* may reconcile us to it as we are Men, yet *Religion* alone can make it comfortable to us as we are Christians.

Q. *What is the best Preparation for Death?*

A. The constant Exercise of Piety and Virtue in the whole Course of our Lives, is the only Armour that is Proof against the Attacks of that dreadful Enemy to Nature. And Men strangely delude themselves, that depend upon any other
 Acts 24. 16. method than that of *keeping a Conscience void of offence towards God and towards Men.*

Q. *But since the Practice of Religion consists in several Particulars, what is the first thing necessary to prepare us for a happy Death?*

A. In order to make Death safe and happy, we must *reconcile our selves to God by a sincere and hearty Repentance.* The *Sting of Death* is Sin, and a Mind loaded with Guilt is not only incapable of the Happiness of the next World, but excluded from it by the solemn Declaration of God, who is Truth it self; so that except we repent, we shall certainly perish. Repentance therefore must be the first Step we should make if ever we design to die well; which we should immediately apply our selves to, lest Sicknes and Death should overtake us, before we have accomplished so necessary a Work; for tho' a Death-bed may be a proper season to renew our Repentance, and to trim our Lamp, yet 'tis the
 most

most unfit time to begin it; and it then very rarely, if ever, takes Effect.

Q. What is farther necessary to prepare us for a happy Death?

A. To set our House in order, by a prudent and pious Disposition of our worldly Concerns. Now that this may be done wisely, requires Time and Consideration, and therefore cannot so well be dispatch'd in our last Moments, when our Minds are disorder'd, our Bodies oppress'd with Pain and Sickness, and when we run the hazard of being impos'd upon by those who out of Interest officiously attend us. And tho' we should in some measure be free from these Inconveniences, yet the little time we shall then have to live, is too pretious to be consumed about Trifles. So that except we make our *Wills* in the Days of our Health, that matter may possibly never be performed, or after such an imperfect manner, as to convey Strife and Contention to our Posterity, and at best to give great Trouble and Disorder to our selves when we are least able to bear it. It requires Thought and Consideration to dispose of our Estates in a Christian manner, to give Children their fitting Portions, to acknowledge the Kindness of our Friends, to reward the Services of our Dependents, and to make Distributions for the Poor and Needy, and all this in so clear a manner, that no Differences or Law-suits may arise among those we leave behind us. To this purpose the Church has wisely directed the Minister, when he attends the Sick Person, if he has not disposed of his Goods, to admonish him to *make his Will, and to declare his Debts, what he owes, and what is owing to him, for the better discharging of his Conscience, and the*

The Rubrick in the Visitation of the Sick,

Quietness of his Executors; withal acknowledging, that Men should often be put in remembrance to take order for the settling their Temporal Estates whilst they are in Health.

Q. What is still farther necessary to make us die with Comfort and Satisfaction?

A. To wean our Affections from the things of this World; for our Sorrow and Concern to part with them, will bear a proportion to the Love and Esteem wherewith we have enjoyed them; and to be separated from Objects upon which we have fixed our Hearts, must be attended with great Uneasiness. We should therefore accustom our selves to resign freely to God, what Death will snatch from us by force, and gently to untye those Knots that fasten us to the World, that we may have less Pain when they are entirely broken. The Practice whereof consists in being less concerned for the things of the Body, and all Bodily Enjoyments; to expect, with Resignation to the Will of God, the success of our temporal Affairs; to suppress all ambitious and covetous Desires; to retrench sometimes the use of lawful Pleasures; to abound in Works of Charity; to be ready to part with what we love most, when God thinks fit; and to bear all Losses and Afflictions without murmuring. That with

1 Cor. 15.
31.

St. Paul we may be able to say, we die daily; not only because the Time of our Death is every Moment approaching, but also because we find daily less Fondness for Life, less Earnestness for Trifles, less Desire of Glory, less Eagerness for Profit, and less Concern for whatever the World most esteems.

Q. What

Q. What farther Care should we exercise about Preparation for Death?

A. We should use great Circumspection about the spending our Time; which is the precious Talent entrusted to us by God to fit and prepare our Souls for a happy Eternity; and ought not to be consumed in impertinent Visits, nor to be squandered in vain Diversions, nor to be loitered away in unaccountable Sloath, as if Mirth and doing nothing were the Business of Life. Wherefore if we are settled in a Calling, let us manage it with Justice and Diligence, always remembring we have a Christian Calling of greater Importance; if we are not engaged in the World, let us chuse such Circumstances as we shall most approve in a dying Hour; if we have great Estates and the Advantages of Power and Understanding, let us look upon our selves as under greater Obligations to spend our Time well; because in such Circumstances there is greater Capacity and Leisure to attend the Good of others, as well as the Salvation of our own Souls. In order to this, we should frequently reflect upon the great Business we have to do in this World, and the uncertain Time that is allotted to the Performance of it, so that if we neglect what is in our Hands, we may never be trusted with another Opportunity; and let our Zeal be never so great, when we come to die, we shall wish we had done more.

Q. What will give us particular Comfort upon a Death-bed?

A. Works of Mercy and Charity; because such Actions are the best Proof of our Sincerity in Religion, and are an Evidence that we can part with what is generally esteemed dearest in this

Mat. 25, 35,
&c.

this World, for the sake of that God whom we Worship. Shewing Mercy to the Poor, perfects our Repentance, and entitles us to the Mercy of God, when we shall stand most in need of it. The Scrutiny at the Day of Judgment will be whether we have fed the Hungry, cloathed the Naked, relieved the Stranger, and ministred to the Sick and those that are in Prison; and what we in this Kind do to the poor Members of Christ, is reckoned as done to himself.

Q. Wherein consists our immediate Preparation for Death?

A. In bearing our Sickness that precedes it, with a true Christian Frame and Temper of Mind; with great Patience under our Sufferings, and Resignation of Mind to the Will of God; with a firm Trust and Dependence upon his infinite Wisdom and Goodness; and with thankful Acknowledgments of those Mercies with which he allays the Sorrows of our Distemper, and lightens the Burthen we labour under. Which Acts of our Mind should be frequently expressed in our Addresses to God, whose Grace and Assistance we should constantly implore, to enable us in this time of Trial to discharge the Duty of good Christians.

Q. Wherein consists the exercise of Patience upon a Sick-bed?

A. In carefully restraining all Murmurings against God, or any Discontent by reason of what he lays upon us. In watching against all the Temptations to Anger, as the Mistakes and Inadvertencies of our Attendants, the unseasonable Kindness of our Friends, the Disagreeableness of our Medicines, and the Preparation of
our

our Food. In curbing anxious Fears of worse that may happen. And in being content to wait God's Time for our Deliverance.

Q. Wherein consists the exercise of Trust in God upon a Sick-bed?

A. In quieting our Minds under the Apprehension of future Evils, by considering that we are in the Hands of a good God, who will lay no more upon us than we are able to bear; and who will in his due time either remove what afflicts us, or give us Strength to endure it in such a manner, that it may contribute to the improvement of our Vertue and the Increase of our Happiness. And that however destitute we may leave our nearest Relations, as Wife and Children, yet that they are under the Protection of his Providence, whose Blessing is the richest Portion, and without which the best humane Provision is no Security.

Q. Wherein consists the exercise of Resignation upon a Sick-bed?

A. In resting fully assured that what God chooses for us is much better than what we could wish for our selves. In embracing our Sickness and our Pains as Correctives of our past Follies, and as proper Methods for our Growth in Grace. In being contented to refer the Continuance and Event of our Sickness to God's good Pleasure, because his infinite Wisdom knows the best season for our Deliverance; and as he first put us into this World, so he is fittest to judge when we should go out of it.

Q. How may we exercise Thankfulness upon a Sick-bed?

A. By acknowledging that we suffer less than we deserve, and that our Sufferings are needful
to

to recover us to a right Mind, being designed by God to do us that Good, and to bring us to that Sense of him and our selves, which perhaps nothing else would have done. By owning those frequent Allays God gives to our Sorrows, and those great Helps and Supports we receive under them, from the Advantage of our Friends, good Attendance, fitting Medicines, and all other Conveniences of Life. For in the worst Condition, if we turn our Prospect upon the best part of it, we shall find Reason to own God's Mercy; and in the best Estate, if we always dwell upon what is grievous, we shall be too apt to make Complaints.

Q. How ought we to exercise our Devotion on a Sick-bed?

A. By desiring the Assistance of a *spiritual Guide* to offer up our Prayers, and to support our Weakness with the most comfortable *Via-ticum* of the Blessed Sacrament. By spiritualizing all the Accidents of our Sickness, making them a rise for pious and devout Thoughts, which may be sent up in frequent Ejaculations to God, who alone can be our Comfort under all our Distress. By imploring his Blessing upon all the Means we use for our Recovery, and by offering to him all the Pains we endure, as what we are more willing to suffer than to offend him.

Q. Wherein consists the Happiness of the Death of the Righteous?

A. Not in any Freedom from *painful and noisome Diseases*; nor in any Exemption from sudden and unseen Accidents and Dangers, which often bring the Righteous as well as the Wicked to their Graves. For we see *Lazarus*, for whom
was

was prepared a retreat in *Abraham's Bosome*, Luke 16. 19, 20. had his Body full of Sores, and ended his Life in a miserable and forlorn Condition; while the *Rich Man*, whose Luxury had kindled for him inextinguishable Flames, only grows sick and dies. Thus the blessed *Martyrs* expired in Flames and upon Racks, while their cruel *Persecutors* died in their Beds. So that this Happiness of the good Man's Death must be distinguished by the Temper and Disposition of his Mind, and is founded in a well-grounded Hope and comfortable Expectation of a blessed Immortality, thro' the Merits of Christ's Death promised to his sincere tho' imperfect Obedience. This makes him contented to quit that Body which he has always mortified, and to leave this World as a strange Land, where he has been detained a Captive.

Q. What Method may be taken to make our selves expert in all the devout Acts of a pious Soul upon the Approach of Death?

A. To set apart some time in our Retirements to fit and prepare our selves for Death, by a solemn Exercise of all such Virtues as we shall then stand most in need of; that we may not be at a loss to perform them when we shall be in a weak and languishing Condition. I think the Evenings of such *Sundays* and *Festivals*, whereon we receive the blessed Sacrament, may properly be dedicated to this purpose. So that when we really come into the Confines of Death, our Minds may be stored with devout Thoughts, and may readily express themselves in those pious Acts which we frequently exercised upon such a Prospect.

The

The PRAYERS.

I.

GRant, O Lord, that as I am baptised into the Death of thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying my corrupt Affections, I may be buried with him, and that thro' the Gate and Grave of Death, I may pass to a joyful Resurrection, for his Merits who died and was buried and rose again for us, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

Dr. Which-
cot.

Help me, O God, so to order my Conversation in the World, so to govern my Spirit, and to lead such a Life, upon which I may safely dye. And superadd this to all the Grace and Favour thou hast shewn me all along in Life, not to remove me hence, but with all advantage for Eternity; when I shall be in a due Preparation of Mind, in a holy Disposition of Soul, in a perfect Renunciation of the Guise of this mad and sinful World; when I shall be entirely resigned up to thee my God, when I shall have clear Acts of Faith in God by Jesus Christ, high and reverential Thoughts of thee in my Mind, enlarged and enflamed Affections towards thee. And when I come to leave the World, afford me such a mighty Power and Presence of thy own good Spirit, that I may have solid Consolation in believing, and depart in the Faith of God's Elect. That I may chearfully follow thee into the Estate on the other side Death, of which thou hast given so great an Assurance by the

the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath brought Life and Immortality to Light by the Gospel, and who hath promised to change these our vile Bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious Body, according to the working of his mighty Power, by which he is able to subdue all things unto himself; to whom with thee, O Father, and Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, World without end. *Amen.*

III.

GRant, O Lord, that I may end my Life ^{M^r Kettle-} in thy Fear and Favour, and receive my ^{well.} Death whenever it shall approach, not as my Curse but as my Deliverance, as a Rest from my Labours; and an Entrance upon a Life without Trouble and without Sin. Remember not against me my manifold Follies, but let them all be done away by thy Mercies, and my blessed Saviour's Merits, and my own true Repentance; that I may come to my last Change without Guilt, and foresee its near Approach without Fear or Impatience. And enable my Soul to strip it self of all fleshly Affections before it leaves my Body, and to be of like Mind and Disposition with the holy Angels and beatified Spirits before it goes to keep them Company. And in my last Trial, bless my sick-bed with the benefit of a spiritual Guide; and with an Opportunity of receiving the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ; that the strength of that heavenly Food may cheer my fainting Spirits, and carry me with Joy to my Journey's end; make me then to watch all Opportunities of renouncing my own Will and resigning my self
to

to thine, and of shewing forth Devotion of Spirit, holy Obedience, Patience, Faith and humble Confidence in thee; and exercise the same diligently, as my last Labours for Immortality, and for securing thy everlasting Mercy thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

IV.

STrengthen me, O God; in my last Agonies; and as my Strength decays, let my Pains wear off. But when my Strength fails, let not my Faith fail; even in Death, enable me to trust in thee. Deliver me from all violent Disorders of a troubled Fancy, or painful Delusions of my ghostly Enemy. Oh! let him not be able to disturb and terrifie me, or any way prevail against me. Have me in thy Custody, O holy Father! for *nothing can take me out of thy Hands*; give thy holy Angels charge to stand about me, to guard and receive my poor Soul at my Departure, and to conduct and carry it to the blessed Recepracles of Rest and Peace. If it be thy gracious Will, O Lord, make my Pains short and my Death easie, at least not extremely tedious or grievous to me. But if thou hast otherwise ordered, thy blessed Will be done; only give me Patience to bear them, and spiritual Comforts under them, and at thine own time, make my Death my Passage to a joyful Resurrection to a blessed and eternal Life, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

C H A P. VI.

Rogation Days.

Q. *What Fast does the Church observe at this Season?*

A. The Fast of the Rogation Days, which are the *Munday, Tuesday, and Wednesday* before *Holy Thursday*, or the *Ascension* of our Lord.

Q. *Why are they called Rogation Days?*

A. From the extraordinary Prayers and Supplications which with Fasting were at this time offered to God by devout Christians. The Latins called them *Rogations*, and the *Greeks Litanies*. In these Fasts the Church had not only a regard to prepare our Minds to celebrate our Saviour's *Ascension* after a devout manner; but by fervent Prayers and Humiliation, to appease God's Wrath, and deprecate his Displeasure; so that he might avert those Judgments which the Sins of a Nation deserved; that he might be pleased to bless the Fruits, with which the Earth is at this time covered, and not pour upon them those Scourges of his Wrath, Pestilence and War, which ordinarily begin in this Season.

Q. *When were these Rogation Days established in the Church?*

A. The use of these earnest Supplications for the Mercy of God, which were called *Litanies*, was very early practised in the Christian Church, the Pattern whereof we have in Scripture appointed by God himself in a time of general Joel. 2. 7.
F f Calamity;

1 Tim. 2. 1.

Le Cointe
Annal. Ec-
cles. Fran.
Tom. 1.
p. 285, 286.

Calamity; and such *Supplications* are thought to be suggested by St. Paul in those several kinds of publick Prayers, which he enjoyns to *Timothy*. But this Season before our Lord's Ascension, for *Litanies* and *Rogations*, was fixed by *Mamertus* Bishop of *Vienne* about the middle of the *fifth Century*, upon the Prospect of some particular Calamities that threatned his Diocese. Some few Years after, this Example was followed by *Sidonius* Bishop of *Clermont*; and in the beginning of the *sixth Century*, the first Council of *Orleans* appointed that they should be yearly observed.

Q. *Wherein consists the Piety of this Institution?*

A. In that it testifies our Dependence upon God, in those Expectations we entertain of Temporal Happiness. And in that we acknowledge all second Causes are entirely at his Disposal; and that the solemn Repentance and earnest Prayers of a Nation, are the most effectual means to appease God's Wrath and avert publick Evils. For thus we find in the Old Testament among the People of God, that his Providences were suited to their Manners, and they were constantly prosperous or afflicted as Piety and Virtue flourished or declined among them. And the crying Sins of a Nation cannot hope to escape publick Judgments, unless they be prevented by a general Repentance and Humiliation; it being only in this Life that publick Bodies and Communities of Men, as such, are liable to Punishment.

Q. *What was the Service enjoined upon these Days?*

A. At the Reformation, when all Processions were

were abolished by reason of the Abuse of them, yet for retaining the Perambulation of the Circuits of Parishes, 'twas enjoined, that the People shall once a Year at the time accustomed, with the *Curate* and substantial Men of the Parish, walk about the Parishes as they were accustomed, and at their return to Church make their *Common-Prayers*. Provided that the *Curate* in their said common Perambulations used heretofore in the Days of *Rogations*, at certain convenient Places shall admonish the People to give thanks to God, in the beholding of God's Benefits, for the increase and Abundance of his Fruits upon the Face of the Earth, with the saying of the 103 Psalm; at which time also the same Minister shall inculcate this and such Sentences, *Cursed be he that translateth the Bounds and Doles of his Neighbour*. Injunc. Q. Eliz. 18, 19.

Q. *But since all Christians own the great and wonderful Efficacy of Prayer; let me know wherein the Nature of Prayer consists?*

A. Prayer is the *Address of the Soul to God*, and the *Ascent of the Mind towards Heaven*; which receives different Names according to those various Subjects the Mind is employed upon in such Addressees. When we bewail our particular Sins with Sorrow and full Purposes of Amendment, 'tis called *Confession*; when we implore God's Mercy, and desire any Favour from him, *Petition*; when for the averting any Evil, *Supplication*; when we express a grateful sense of Benefits received, *Thanksgiving*; when we acknowledge and adore the Divine Perfections, *Praise*; when we beg any thing for others, it is stiled *Intercession*. So that in all these Acts

we have the great Honour to be admitted into God's Presence, and to treat with him about those things which chiefly concern our own Happiness, or that of our Neighbours.

Q. But since God knows all things, and being infinite Goodness is ready to supply us; how does it appear necessary to make such Addresses to him?

A. Prayer is necessary as it is one of the highest Acts of Religious Worship, whereby we acknowledge God's infinite Perfections, and own our entire Dependence upon him; that he is the Fountain of all Goodness, and that we are nothing but Weakness and Imperfection. Besides, God has established it as a means, whereby we are to obtain whatever we want in relation to our Souls and Bodies; we are to *ask* before it shall be given, we must *seek* before we shall find, we must *knock* before it will be opened unto us. And he has promised the Assistance of his *Holy Spirit* to help us in the Performance of our Prayers; and has appointed his *Son* to intercede by Virtue of his Merits for their Acceptance. So that a Man must be very *Atheistical*, that forbears paying the great Creator this Homage that is due to him, or very careless of his *Salvation* that neglects such admirable means for the effecting it.

Q. What has been the Practice of the World in this particular?

A. The most barbarous Nations, as they have owned the Being of a God, so have they always express'd their respect and Reverence of a Deity, in making Addresses to him; and thus much was imported by their offering Sacrifices, that God was the great Sovereign of the Universe, that all good things came from above,

above, and that from his Bounty alone they could expect a supply of their Wants. In all Ages good Men have in this manner constantly exercised their Devotion, and have exposed themselves to the utmost Dangers and Hazards, rather than neglect their Duty in this Kind; nay the blessed *Jesus* thus testified his Obedience and Submission, his Love and Humility; he often went into the places of publick Worship, and frequently retired all alone, and spent whole Nights in the Exercise of Prayer.

Q. What ought we to pray for?

A. In the first place we ought to *seek the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness*, all those Mat. 6. 33. things that are necessary to our Salvation. That God would be pleased to illuminate our Understandings with the Knowledge of Divine Truths. That he would pardon our Sins, strengthen our Resolutions of better Obedience, and assist us to overcome Temptations; and by the Help of his Spirit, enable us to walk in his ways all the Days of our Lives. That as to this World, he would be pleased to supply us with such a share of the good things of it, as may be most agreeable to his Will, and answer the ends of his universal Providence, and may most conduce to our eternal Welfare.

Q. What Encouragement have we to beg the supply of our spiritual and temporal Wants?

A. The infinite Goodness of the divine Nature, always ready to exert and communicate it self to capable Subjects, and that universal Providence whereby God governs the World, are sufficient Motives to prevail upon us to approach the Throne of his Majesty. But lest his Greatness and the sense of our own Unworthiness

should make us afraid, and keep us at a distance, God has been graciously pleased to excite us to the Performance of this Duty by Promises of
 Ps. 145. 18. Success; *that he will be nigh to all those that*
 86. 5. *call upon him.* That he is *ready to forgive and*
plenteous in Mercy to all that call upon him.
 Mat. 21. 22. That *whatever we shall ask in Prayer; believ-*
ing, we shall receive.

Q. Upon what Conditions has God promised to hear our Prayers?

1 Joh. 3. 14. A. The great Confidence of our being heard must be laid in asking according to his Will,
 3. 22. and in soliciting his Favour upon such Terms as he has promised to grant it. Which implies, that when we beg Pardon for our Sins, we must
 Prov. 28. 9. resolve to forsake them; for the *Prayer of the Wicked is an Abomination to the Lord:* That we be ready to forgive those that trespass against
 Mat. 5. 7. us, because 'tis the *merciful Man shall obtain Mercy:* That when we ask for any Virtue, we must be sure diligently to seek and endeavour after it: That when we crave the Help of divine Grace, we must be ready to co-operate and
 Mark 4. 25. concur with it; for *to him that bath, shall be given, and from him that bath not, shall be taken away, even that which he bath:* That when we pray for any temporal Blessings, we take all prudent and lawful means to acquire them, and resign our selves entirely to the Wisdom of his Providence to give such success to our Endeavours as he shall think most conducing to our Salvation and the good of others: And that all these Petitions for spiritual and temporal Wants be offered to God thro' the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ only.

Q. In what manner ought we to pray?

A. With

A. With such *lowliness of Mind*, such *reverent and serious Deportment*, as may plainly testify the Respect and Veneration we have for God's infinite Majesty. With that *intenseness and application of Thought*, as to engage our Hearts as well as Lips in his Service. With such *Fervency of Affection*, and such a measure of Importunity, as may shew how desirous we are of the Mercy we request, and how highly we value and esteem what we ask for. With such a *Faith*, as consists in firmly believing we shall receive the good things we desire, when we have performed those Conditions; upon which God has promised to bestow them. To all which we must add, *Constancy and Perseverance*; taking all Opportunities for it, and spending much time in this Duty, than which none of all the Duties enjoined by the Christian Religion will turn to a better and more comfortable Account, if our Hearts and Lives be but answerable to our Prayers.

Q. *Is it possible to avoid all wandering Thoughts in Prayer?*

A. Considering the Frame and Constitution of our Natures, and the close Connexion there is between the Body and Soul; 'tis impossible but that when we are at our Prayers our Thoughts may be diverted, and our Intentions interrupted by the former Impressions of Study or Business. All we can do is to strive against these Distractions, to bewail this Weakness, and to compose our Thoughts to all that Seriousness our Temper and Circumstances will permit; to recall our Minds as soon as we perceive they run out upon other Objects, and immediately to throw away all such Thoughts as are foreign

to our present Employment. What makes these Distractions criminal, is when we willingly entertain them, and indulge our selves in thinking upon other Objects without restraint; when we keep our unreasonable Passions under no Government, and when we take no care to compose our selves to a serious Temper, by considering in whose awful Presence we appear.

Q. What Prayers are most acceptable to God and most necessary for us?

A. Those that are offered in publick Assemblies, which have these Advantages above private Devotions, that God is most honoured and glorified by such Addresses, and a sense of his Majesty is maintained in the World, somewhat suitable to his most excellent Greatness and Goodness, when by outward Signs and Tokens we publish and declare the inward Regard and Esteem we have for his divine Perfections: We do hereby declare our selves Members of the Body of Christ, which is his Church; which we cannot be, to any purpose, without having Fellowship with God and one another in all Duties; of which Prayer and Praise are the chief. To such Assemblies our Saviour promises his special Presence, and has appointed a particular Order of Men to offer up our Prayers in such places. We may expect greater success when our Petitions are made with the joint and unanimous consent of our Fellow Christians, and when our Devotions receive warmth and heat from their exemplary Zeal. Which Considerations should make all good Christians frequently attend the publick Worship.

Q. Is this Obligation sufficiently discharged by going to Church, on Sundays and Holy-Days?

A. It

A. It is to be wisht, that all Christians were constant in attending the Publick Worship on *Sundays* and *Holy-Days*; because 'tis likely 'twould dispose them to repeat such Exercises of Devotion with greater frequency. But considering that among the *Jews* there was a *Morning* and *Evening Sacrifice* daily offered to God at the Temple; and that the Precepts of the Gospel oblige us to *pray always*, and to *pray without ceasing*; and that the ancient *Prophets* expressly declare, that there should be as frequent Devotion in the Days of Christ, as there had been in former Times; that *Prayer shall be made unto him continually, and daily shall he be praised*. Luk. 21.36. 1 Thes. 5. 17. Psal. 72.15. Considering these things, I say, as *Prayer*, the Christian Sacrifice, should be offered Morning and Evening in publick Assemblies; so they that have such Opportunities, and are not lawfully hinder'd, should endeavour so to regulate their time, as to be able constantly to attend such a great Advantage to the Christian Life. And as those who have leisure cannot better employ it, so they must have but little concern for the Honour and Glory of God, that neglect such Opportunities of declaring and publishing his Praise.

Q. *Is Family-Prayer a Duty incumbent upon him who is the Master of it?*

A. A Master of a Family being answerable to God for the welfare of those Souls that are under his Care, I cannot well understand how a Sense of Religion can be maintained in such a Family without the Exercise of daily Devotion in it, as such a Society. This is the best method to confirm and establish his Children and Servants in the Practice of their Christian Obligations, and an admirable means to draw down the
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the Blessings of God, when in a Body they daily acknowledge his Divine Perfections, and supplicate his Favour for the Mercies they stand in need of. Nor may this Devotion be neglected at our Meals, for we ought to beg the Blessing of God upon those good Creatures provided for our use; since 'tis by the *Word of God and Prayer* that they are sanctified to us. The Principles of natural Religion teach us thankfully to acknowledge the Benefits we receive, and this particular Instance of it has sufficient Ground from the Example of Christ and his holy Apostles, all the *Evangelists* declaring that our Saviour *blessed and gave Thanks before Meat*; the same St. *Luke* relates of St. *Paul*, and even St. *Paul* himself speaks of it, as the known Practice of the Church among Christians.

Mat. 14. 19.
Mar. 6. 41.
Luke 9. 16.
John 6. 11.

Acts 27.
Rom. 14.

Q. Wherein consists the Spirit of Prayer, or when may we be said to pray by the Spirit?

A. When we approach the Majesty of Heaven, with all such devout Affections and holy Dispositions of Mind, as are wrought in us by the powerful Assistance of the Blessed Spirit. When we confess our Sins with hearty Sorrow and Shame, and with firm Resolutions of better Obedience, When we beg God's Mercies with a lively Sense of our own Wants, and with an entire Confidence in his infinite Goodness. When we resign our Wills to him, and depend upon the Wisdom of his Providence in all those Temporal Blessings and Deliverances we expect from him. When we shew forth his Praise, not only with our Lips, but in our Lives, by giving up our selves to his Service. As for the Inspiration of the Matter, and the Expressions of our Prayers; that was an extraordinary

ordinary Gift, only temporary, and long since ceased, and intended only as other miraculous Gifts were, for the first Propagation of the Gospel.

Q. What are the great Advantages of the frequent and devout Exercise of this Duty?

A. The constant Exercise of Prayer is the best method to get the Mastery of our evil Inclinations, and to overcome our vicious Habits. It preserves a lively Sense of our Duty upon our Minds; and fortifies us against those Temptations that continually assault us. It raises our Souls above this World, by making spiritual Objects familiar to them; and supports us under the Calamities and Crosses of this Life, by sanctifying such Afflictions. It leads us gradually to the Perfection of Christian Piety; and preserves that Union between our Souls and God, in which our Spiritual Life consists. Without it we in vain pretend to discharge those Duties that are incumbent upon us as Christians; or to prosper in our temporal Affairs, which must have God's Blessing to crown them with Success.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

A Almighty God, who hast promised to hear the Petitions of them that ask in thy Son's Name; I beseech thee mercifully to incline thine Ears to me, when I make my Prayers and Supplications unto thee; and grant that I may so faithfully ask according to thy Will, that I may effectually obtain the Relief of my Necessities,

Necessities, to the setting forth of thy Glory, through Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

II.

O God, heavenly Father, who by thy Son Jesus Christ hast promised to all them that seek thy Kingdom, and the Righteousness thereof, all things necessary to their bodily Sustainance: Send us, I beseech thee, such seasonable Weather, as may preserve to our use the kindly Fruits of the Earth, and that in due time we may enjoy them. I acknowledge, O Lord, that it is from thy Gift that the Rain doth fall, the Earth is fruitful, Beasts increase, and Fishes do multiply; and tho' for our Sins we have worthily deserved Scarcity and Dearth, and have justly exposed our selves to be punished with great Sicknes and Mortality, and to be delivered into the Hands of our Enemies, yet for the sake of thy blessed Son, and upon our own true Repentance, send us Cheapness and Plenty, healthful Seasons, Unity, Peace and Concord; deliver us from Lightning and Tempest, from Plague, Pestilence and Famine, from Battel and Murther, and from sudden Death. Increase the Fruits of the Earth by thy heavenly Benediction; and grant that we receiving thy bountiful Liberality, may use the same to thy Glory, the Relief of those that are Needy, and to our own Comfort, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

III.

O Almighty God, who in thy Wrath didst send a Plague upon thine own People in the Wilderness, for their obstinate Rebellion against *Moses* and *Aaron*; and also in the time
of

of King *David* didst slay with the Plague of Pestilence threescore and ten thousand: Be merciful to thy sinful People, who have so many ways provoked thy Wrath, that we are afraid of thy Judgments; remember not, Lord, our Sins, nor the Sins of our Forefathers, but according to the greatness of thy Mercies think thou upon us for thy Goodness sake. Turn us, O Lord, and so let thy Anger cease from us. Be favourable, O Lord, be favourable to thy People, who turn to thee in Weeping, Fasting and Praying. Thou sparest when we deserve Punishment, and in thy Wrath thinkest upon Mercy. Spare thy People, good Lord, spare them, and let not thy Heritage be brought to Confusion. Hear us, O Lord, for thy Mercy is great, and after the Multitude of thy Mercies look upon us, through the Merits and Mediation of thy blessed Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

C H A P. VII.

Ember Days in Whitsun-Week.

Q. **W**hat Fast does the Church observe at this time?

A. The second Season of the *Ember Days*; which are the *Wednesday*, *Friday* and *Saturday* after the Feast of *Pentecost*; *Trinity-Sunday*, which immediately follows, being one of the stated Times for *Ordinations*.

Q. What do you mean by Ordination?

A. A Privilege peculiar to the Character of
a Bishop,

a *Bishop*, who is a Governour in the Church of God; whereby he conveys Authority to some to preach the Gospel, and to administer the Sacraments, who are called *Presbyters*; and to others to be Assistants to himself, and the *Presbyters* in their spiritual Administrations, who are called *Deacons*; which is performed by *Prayer* and the *Imposition of Hands*: A solemn Ceremony of blessing and devoting Persons to the sacred Function. For as the laying the Hands upon the Head, was a Rite of Benediction used by *Jacob* in blessing *Joseph's* Children, and by *Moses* in blessing *Joshua*; so by the Sinner's laying their Hands on the Head of the Sacrifice, it appears that it was a Ceremony used in devoting things to God; upon which Accounts this was appropriated to the Ordination of *Church-men*, who are to be blessed and devoted to God, and was made use of to express that Right and Authority which Persons do receive together with it, for the *Exercise* and *Discharge* of their *Ministerial Function*.

Q. *What Foundation is there for this Subordination of Church-Officers, from the Institution of Jesus Christ.*

A. Our Blessed Saviour, while here upon Earth, was himself the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls; an High-Priest called of God; who in his Life-time established under himself two distinct Orders of Church-Officers, the one superiour to the other, viz. the Twelve Apostles and the Seventy Disciples; who are so distinguish'd from one another, that it implies a Distinction in their Office; they are mention'd apart by different Names, and sent forth at different Times. In which Establishment our Saviour kept

as nigh to the Form in use among the *Jews* as was possible; who had their *High-Priest*, the *Priests* and the *Levites*.

Q. How does it appear that the Office of the Apostles was superiour to that of the Seventy?

A. This is evident not only from our *Saviour's* particular Care, Solitude and Intercession for these *twelve*, and his diligent instructing and teaching them more than the rest of his Followers, revealing to them the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven: But from hence also, that the Successors of the *Apostles* were chosen out of the *Seventy*; and that *Matthias*, who was ordained into the Place of *Judas*, is by the *Ancients* affirmed to be of that Number; which argues the *Apostles* to be superior to the *Seventy*, otherwise it had been no Advancement to the *Seventy* to have succeeded them. Besides, we find in Scripture the *Apostles* exercising spiritual Powers, which the *Seventy* were not endowed with.

Q. What Powers did the Apostles exercise, which the Seventy were not endowed with?

A. The Power of *Imposition of Hands* in Ordinations, as is plain in the Institution of *Deacons*; *Acts 6.* who, though chosen by the rest of the Disciples, yet they were set before the Apostles, and when they had prayed, they laid their Hands on them. The Power of confirming baptized Christians; for when *St. Philip* had converted and baptized the Men of *Samaria*, the *apostles* sent *St. Peter* *Acts 8.* and *St. John* to lay their Hands on them, that they might receive the *Holy Ghost*. The power of *Jurisdiction* and *Authority* to govern the Church, as is evident in the Case of *Diotrephes* a Presbyter; whom for not giving heed to *St. John's* Letters, and for his Rejection of some faithful People

3 John 10. People from the Catholick Communion, without Cause and without Authority, St. John the Apostle threatned, *that when he came, he would remember his Deeds*; which would have been to no purpose, if he had not had coercive Jurisdiction to have punish'd his Delinquency.

Q. *But was not this Superiority and Subjection among the Ecclesiastical Orders temporary, and to cease with the Persons of the Apostles?*

A. These Powers peculiar to the *superior Order*, being necessary for the good Government of the Church, 'tis plain in fact they did not expire with the Apostles. But as our Saviour glorified

Joh. 20. 21, 22, &c. *not himself to be an High Priest, but had his Commission from God the Father; so after his Resurrection, he invested the Apostles with the same Commission his Father had given unto him.*

As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you; and he breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive you the Holy Ghost. In which Commission is plainly contained the Authority of ordaining others, and a Power to transfer that Commission upon others, and those upon others to the end of the World. And to shew that it was not merely Personal to the Apostles, our Saviour promises to be with them and their Successors in the Execution of this Commission always, even

Mat. 28. 20. *unto the end of the World. And in pursuance of this Commission, the Apostles ordained Bishops in all Churches, particularly St. James at Jerusalem, Epaphroditus at Philippi, as St. Paul did Titus at Crete, that he should set things in order that were wanting, and ordain Elders in every City, and rebuke with all Authority, (the true Characters of Episcopal Power) and Timothy at Ephesus, even after the Presbytery was*

Tit. 1. 5.
C. 2. 15.

formed

formed and settled; St. Paul having laboured among them for three Years together. And there can be no other Reason given why in the primitive Language of the Church *Bishops* are stiled *Apostles*, but because they succeeded in the *Apostolical* Superiority.

Q. What was the Practice of the Primitive Church in respect to the Government of it?

A. The Christian Church in the Ages next succeeding the Apostles, gives full Testimony in behalf of *Episcopal* Government. Some Writers that attest this, lived in the very Days of the Apostles, and were their immediate Disciples; and others there are that succeeded those that were Disciples of the Apostles; which makes them competent Witnesses of the Matter of Fact that is in question. St. Clement, who conversed with the Apostles, mentions Three Orders of Church-Officers in his Time; and particularly distinguishes the Bishop from the Presbyter. St. Ignatius, who in the Life time of some of the Apostles was Bishop of Antioch, is full and expresse for the Derivation of the superior Order from the Apostles. And 'tis not to be imagined that the Christian Church would ever have admitted Bishops so universally, as it is apparent they did in Ignatius's Time, when some of the Apostles were living, had not some of them derived their Authority from the Apostles immediately; of which we have Assurance from Ecclesiastical History. The Writers of the next Age, Justin Martyr, Hegesippus, Clemens Alexandrinus and Irenæus confirm the same thing. All these supported by the Testimonies of Tertullian, Origen and St. Cyprian, who flourished in the Age following. And to strengthen all this,

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Clem. Epif.
ad Corinth.
p. 53. edit.
Jun.
H^{is} ^{αποστολ}
& Πρεσβ^υ
τορ^{ων}, ib.
p. 2.

this, we have conveyed to us by *Eusebius* the Succession of *Bishops* from the *Apostles* in some great Churches, such as *Jerusalem*, *Rome*, *Antioch*, and *Alexandria*; and 'tis reasonable to judge of the Government of those Churches that were not known, from those that were.

Q. But do not the Words Bishop and Presbyter in Scripture sometimes denote the same Office?

A. 'Tis granted that these Words were at first often used promiscuously to denote either Order; and generally that which we now call the Order of *Priests*. But then as in that time the superior Order were called *Apostles*; so the Office of these *Presbyters*, who are here supposed sometimes in Scripture to have the Name of *Bishops*, was not to ordain Elders, or to exercise Jurisdiction, as those do who now have that Name of *Bishops* appropriated to them. This clearly appears by the Charge given to *Timothy*, the first Bishop of *Ephesus*, how he was to proceed against his *Presbyters* when they transgressed; to sit in Judgment upon them, to examine Witnesses against them, and pass Censures upon them.

1 Tim. 5. 9. *Against an Elder, that is a Presbyter, receive not an Accusation, but before two or three Witnesses; and them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear.* And one may as well pretend there was no Difference between the Office of an Emperor and a General of the Army, because the word *Imperator* is applied to both; as to prove a Parity between Church-Officers from the promiscuous use of the word *Bishop*.

Q. But was not a Bishop anciently no more than a Pastor of a particular Congregation?

A. 'Tis plain, I think, from the Condition of the first Churches that were establish'd, that the

Bishop

Biſhop had the Overſight of ſeveral Congregations, which as to the Church of *Jeruſalem* is neceſſarily inferred from the particular Number *Acts* 3. 41. of Converts; from the general Expreſſions of *Ch.* 4. 4. wonderful Acceſſions, from the Jealouſie of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who apprehended that *Ch.* 5. 14. all *Jeruſalem* would ſoon become Chriſtians; from the farther Accounts of its increaſe, and of the great Multitudes that were added to it. And we may judge the Church of *Antioch* too *Ch.* 11. 21. great for one Congregation, from the Multitudes ſaid to be converted, from the Number of *Ch.* 13. 1. Apoſtles, and extraordinary Labourers reſiding in that City, and from the Conjunction of *Jews* *Ch.* 11. 26. and *Gentiles*, under the common Title and Profeſſion of Chriſtianity. Theſe firſt Churches thus governed by Biſhops were nor ſingular in their Conſtitution; but all other Churches of the Apoſtles planting were of the ſame kind, deſigned for the like, and yet farther Increaſe. And theſe ſeveral Congregations of Believers made but one Church; *St. James* our Lord's Brother being ordained *Biſhop* of the Church of *Jeruſalem* by the Apoſtles immediately upon our Saviour's Aſcenſion. And after *St. Peter*, the Government of the Church of *Antioch* was committed to *Evodius*, who was ſucceeded by *Ignatius*.

Q. *What Light is there from Scripture for this method of governing the Church?*

A. In the Hiſtory of *St. Paul*, we find when in any place he had converted a competent number, he took care to improve them in the Knowledge of the Truth; and as theſe Converts were made Partakers of the ſame common Doctrines and Faith, ſo they were to be perpetually united by a Communion in Worſhip, in Prayer and the

Sacraments; being obliged to assemble themselves together for that end under the Apostle, the Church-Officer that converted them. But Heb. 10. 25. when he was called to preach the Gospel in other Places, it was necessary to ordain such Church-Officers as might take Care of the Church in the Doctrine and Discipline of it; and others to take Care of the Poor, lest the former should be hinder'd in their spiritual Administrations. Now this Constitution did not take away the Relation the Apostle had to such a Church, the Officers he had constituted acting in Subordination to him, whether present or absent: As is plain in his Proceedings upon the case of Scandal given in the Church of *Corinth*; and when some Teachers in the same Church began to set themselves up in opposition to the Apostle, he asserts his Authority and his Relation to them. But when his *Province* was so far extended, that he could not visit every part himself; and his Communication by Letters would not answer all the Occasions of those Churches he had planted, he did not resign all Authority into the Hands of every particular *Presbytery*; but sent Persons, not only endowed with extraordinary Gifts, but with Apostolical Power to ordain Elders, to preach the Gospel, to end Disputes, to censure the Irregular, whether of the Clergy or People; and by all means to provide for the welfare of those Churches committed to them, Of this kind were *Barnabas*, *Timothy*, *Titus*, *Crescens*, *Epaphroditus* and *Shosthenes*. These governed those Churches over which they were appointed by full Apostolical Power, which was transmitted to their Successors.

Q. But

Q. But does not St. Jerome give another account of the Original of Episcopacy, and affirm that the Church was first governed by a Common Council, or Collegē of Presbyters, till Divisions reigning by reason of parity, it was decreed over all the World that one from among the Presbyters should be chosen out of the rest, and be called more peculiarly their Bishop; to whom the Care of the whole Church should appertain, that all Seeds and Occasions of Schism might be taken away? Which universal Decree is supposed to be made about the Year 140.

Hiero. Com. ad Titum. cap. 1. 7.

A. The Reasons that St. Jerome gives, are certainly very much for the Advantage of Episcopal Government. But allowing this Testimony to bear the Sense the Adversaries of Episcopacy put upon it; we must consider that St. Jerome flourish'd in the latter end of the fourth Century; and consequently is not so competent an Evidence of this Matter of Fact, as those are who lived in the Apostles Days, and in the Time of their Successors; yet, however he express himself, when he resented the Treatment of the Bishop of Jerusalem, who exercised his Jurisdiction over him farther than he thought it might be justly extended; or when he endeavoured to curb the Insolence of the Deacons, who began to advance themselves above the Presbyters; in other places he talks after a different rate, and makes Bishops to be Successors to the Apostles, as well as the rest of the most eminent Fathers had done before him; and even where he speaks most for a Parity, he makes Ordination peculiar to the Bishop; *Quid enim facit exceptā ordinatione Episcopus quod Presbyter non faciat?* Epist. ad Evag. Besides,

Hiero. in Psal. & ad Evag.

if any such Decree had been made in the Apostles Time, it would have been an *Apostolick* Institution; and we might have expected to have found some mention of it in the Scriptures; if afterward, as is supposed about 140, primitive Antiquity would have given us some Account of such an important Alteration; the contrary of which we find in all the Writers of that Age. Neither so can St. *Jerome* be reconciled to himself, who reckons several *Bishops* long before that time, in his Catalogue of *Ecclesiastical* Writers.

Q. What farther shews the Improbability of the sudden Change and Innovation that is suggested?

A. That Universal Agreement that appeared among all the Christian Churches in this matter, there being not one single Church produced in which *Episcopal* Government did not prevail; and this at a time when no *General Council* could meet to enjoin it; nor any *Civil Governour* was concerned to promote it; and when by reason of the heat of Persecution, and the distance of Churches one from another, the Commerce and Intercourse between them was so little or nothing, that it was next to impossible to form a joint Conspiracy to establish it. Besides, all People were obliged to know those who had the *Rule over them*, because the Scriptures engage them to pay to such the Duty of Submission and Obedience, so that they could not have acquiesced in this Innovation without great hazard to their Souls; neither is it likely that the *Presbyters* would so quietly have submitted to this usurp'd Authority, if to the natural Love of Freedom they could have joyned the

the Argument of positive *Apostolical* Institution. Nay, even the Persons thus advanced could have no Motive or Temptation to be ambitious of it; for as this great Charge increased their Labour and their Care, so the first Christian *Bishops* were exposed to the sharpest Fury of their Persecutors, and when any Storm was raised against the Church, they bore the Violence of it. And Men are not generally so fond of Trouble, or so apt to court Danger, as to act against their Duty, in order to bear the one, or expose themselves to the other.

Q. How does it appear that Ordination is the peculiar Privilege of a Bishop?

A. Because in the holy Scriptures of the *New Testament*, we find no Commissions granted, no Orders conferred, no Church-Officers deputed to the Exercise of spiritual Powers, but by those who had *Episcopal Authority*, who were superior to ordinary *Presbyters*. Our Saviour after his Resurrection, gave his *Apostles* their *Joh. 20. 21.* Commission to be the supreme *Governors* of his visible Church; and they being invested with this Power, ordain *Deacons* with Prayer and Im- *Acts 6. 6.* position of Hands. The first Ordination of *Presbyters* we read of, was performed by two Apo- *14. 23.* stles, *Paul* and *Barnabas*, both cloathed with *Episcopal Authority* in an eminent degree. *Ti- 1 Tim. 5.* moty, as has been observed, was settled by *22.* *St. Paul* Bishop of *Ephesus* to this very purpose. *2 Tim. 2. 2.* The same thing is evident concerning *Titus*, *Tit. 1. 5.* who was left in *Crete* to ordain *Presbyters* in every City. And doubtless the *seven Angels*, whereby is meant the *Bishops* of the seven Churches mentioned in the *Revelation*, had the Chapters same Power, because chargeable with the Male- *1, 2, 3.*

Salmasius,
Blondel,
Daillé.

Administration in their respective Churches; which supposes that Ordination could not be performed without them. For how could Bishops be answerable for the Practices of those who had not their Commission from them, and were not subject to them? The genuine Writings of the ancientest *Fathers* of the Catholick Church; who succeeded the Apostles, appropriate this Privilege to Bishops; and the Advocates of the contrary Opinion own freely themselves, that, as soon as the two Orders of *Bishops* and *Presbyters* were distinguished, the Power of Ordination belonged to the *Bishop*. A Concession that must give up the Cause, since sufficient Evidence appears, that *Episcopacy* is of *Apostolical* Institution.

1 Tim. 4.
14.

Q. But does not the laying on the Hands of the Presbytery imply, that Presbyters have the power of Ordination?

Πρεσβυ-
τεριον.

A. Supposing the *Greek* Word, which we translate *Presbytery*, did unquestionably signify a Society of *Presbyters*, how will it appear it was a Society of ordinary Presbyters, which is denied by St. Chrysostom, and other eminent Fathers, for this Reason, That *Timothy* being a Bishop, it was never heard or read, that *Presbyters* could ordain a *Bishop*? But supposing they were ordinary Presbyters, it will not follow it was purely a Presbyterian Ordination, because it is manifest, that St. Paul was present, and laid on his Hands when *Timothy* was ordained; which makes it a fair Pattern of Ordination by a Bishop, with the assistance of his Presbyters; it being unquestionable, that St. Paul was superior both in Order and Power to ordinary Presbyters. And what makes it farther clear, is the

2 Tim. 1.
6.

the force of the different *Greek* Prepoſitions uſed by *St. Paul* in this matter, for a ſmall ſkill in that Language will inform us, that in producing effects, or, which is the ſame thing, the communication of Powers, the firſt *by* denotes the principal, and the other *with* only the aſſiſtant Cauſes. But if the word we tranſlate *Presbyter*, as *Calvin* and divers of the Ancients underſtood it, ſignifie not a College of *Presbyters*, but the Office of a *Presbyter*; what ſhould hinder but that the Text may be thus read; *Neglect not the Gift of the Presbyterate* or the Office of a *Presbyter*, which is in thee, and which was given thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of Hands?

2 Tim. 1. 6.

Δια

1 Tim. 4.

14.

Μετὰ

Inſtit. lib. 4.

c. 3. §. 16.

Euseb. lib.

6. c. 43.

Epiph.

Har. 64.

§. 2.

Hieron. ad

Pamma.

adv. Erro.

Joan. Hier.

Q. What Opposition did Episcopacy meet with in the Primitive Church?

A. In all Places where we have Records, we find ſingle Perſons ſucceeded the Apoſtles, advanced above *Presbyters*, not only in Dignity, but in Office and Authority. And thus it continued for near four hundred Years without Opposition; when *Aerius*, a *Presbyter*, diſappointed of a *Bishoprick*, began to deny the lawfulness of it, and to endeavour an Alteration; upon which Account he is by *Epiphanius* and *St. Auſtin* enrolled in the number of Hereticks; and was by every one look'd upon at leaſt as an Innovator for maintaining an Equality between *Bishops* and *Presbyters*. No other Government was ever eſtabliſhed in the Chriſtian Church beſides *Episcopacy* till the ſixteenth Century, which is a full Proof of the Senſe of the Catholick Church concerning it.

Epiph.

Har. 75.

Aug. de

Har. 53.

Q. What may we learn from the Observation of this Faſt?

A. That

A. That great Care ought to be taken in admitting Persons into the Exercise of the holy Functions, since the *Welfare* of the Church, and the *Honour* of Religion rely so much upon the Behaviour of those who are admitted into *holy Orders*. That the *Salvation* of Mens Souls in a very great measure depends upon the *Watchfulness* and *Conduct* of those who are to be their *Guides* to Heaven. That all Persons ought to enter upon so weighty and tremendous a *Charge*, with great Seriousness and Consideration, with such Preparation of Mind, as may qualifie them to receive that Grace and Assistance which is necessary to the Discharge of it. That 'tis the Duty of all Christians at this time by *Prayer* and *Fasting* to beg God's Blessing upon his own *Institution*, that we may not seem careless or negligent in a Matter of such vast Importance. That we ought to bless God, that in the *Reformation* of our Church from the Corruptions of *Popery*, his good Providence has preserved to us the ancient *Apostolical* Government, those *primitive Orders* in a due Subordination, whereby we are secured of a right and truly Canonical *Ministry*. That we ought to pity and compassionate those that wanted the Advantages we enjoy, and exhort them for their own sakes, and by the Love of Jesus Christ, that they would endeavour to get the ancient primitive Apostolical Church-Government, and by it an undoubted Mission re-established among them; to pray for them, and hope that God will make Allowances for their Defects, till his good Providence enables them to find a Remedy. That no Man ought to take upon him to be God's Representative, or constitute any to be such, without his express Commission for this Purpose, The

The PRAYERS.

I.

Almighty God, the Giver of all good Gifts, who of thy Divine Providence hast appointed divers Orders in thy Church; Give thy Grace, I humbly beseech thee, to all those who are to be called to any Office and Administration in the same; and so replenish them with the Truth of thy Doctrine, and endue them with Innocency of Life, that they may faithfully serve before thee, to the Glory of thy great Name, and the Benefit of thy holy Church, thro' Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

II.

Almighty God, who hast constituted several Degrees of Ministers in thy Church, and didst inspire thy holy Apostles to choose into the Order of *Deacons*, the first Martyr *St. Stephen*, with others full of the Holy Ghost and Wisdom: Mercifully behold thy Servants at this time to be called to the like Office and Administration. Replenish them so with the Truth of thy Doctrine, and adorn them with Innocency of Life, that both by Word and good Example, they may faithfully serve thee in this Office, to the Glory of thy Name, and the Edification of thy Church, thro' the Merits of Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and for ever. *Amen.*

III. Al-

III.

ALmighty God and heavenly Father, who of thy infinite Love and Goodness towards us, hast given to us thy only and most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ to be our Redeemer and Author of eternal Life; who after he had made perfect our Redemption by his Death, and was ascended into Heaven, sent abroad into the World, his Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Doctors and Pastors; by whose Labour and Ministry, he gathered together a great Flock in all the parts of the World, to set forth the Praise of thy Holy Name. For these so great Benefits of thy eternal Goodness, and that thou still vouchsafest to call others to the same Office and Ministry of the Salvation of Mankind; I render unto thee most hearty Thanks, I Worship and Praise thee. And I humbly beseech thee, by the same thy Son, to grant unto me and all that call upon thy Name, that we may shew our selves thankful to thee for these and all other thy Benefits; and that we may daily increase and go forwards in the Knowledge and Faith of thee and thy Son, by thy Holy Spirit; so that as well by thy Ministers, as by them to whom they shall be appointed Ministers, thy holy Name may be always glorified, and thy blessed Kingdom enlarged; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, World without end, Amen.

IV. Most

IV.

Most merciful Father, I beseech thee to send upon thy Servants now to be ordained *Priests* in thy Church, thy heavenly Blessing; that they may be cloathed with Righteousness, and that thy Word spoken by their Mouths may have such success, that it may never be spoken in vain; Grant also that thy People may have Grace to hear and receive the same as thy most holy Word, and the Means of their Salvation, that in all our Words and Deeds, we may seek thy Glory and the increase of thy Kingdom, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

C H A P. VIII.

Ember Days in September.

Q. *What Fast does the Church observe at this time?*

A. The third Season of the *Ember Days*; which are the *Wednesday, Friday and Saturday* after the *fourteenth* of *September*. The *Sunday* following being one of the stated times for conferring the great Honour and Dignity of *holy Orders*.

Q. *Wherein consists the Dignity of the Priesthood?*

A. In the peculiar Relation it has to God, whether we consider him as the Author of it, from whom it received its Institution, or the Nature of those Affairs it treats about, it being or-
dained

Heb. 5. 1. *dained for Men in things pertaining unto God.*
 An Employment, as in its own Nature the most honourable and the most happy, so in its Effects the most beneficial to Mankind.

Q. How does it appear to be the most honourable Employment?

A. Because no Man can be employed in any Work more honourable, than what immediately relates to the King, of Kings and Lord of Lords; and to the Salvation of Souls immortal in their Nature, and redeemed by the *Blood of God*. The Powers committed to their Trust, cannot be exercised by the greatest Princes, as such; and 'tis the same Work in Kind, and in the main End and Design of it, with that of the
 1. 14. *blest Angels, who are ministring Spirits for those who shall be Heirs of Salvation.* 'Tis the same the Son of God discharged, when he condescended to dwell among Men. 'Tis the encreasing and maintaining that Building whereof he laid the Foundation when upon Earth. 'Tis the promoting his glorious Design and Undertaking for the Salvation of Souls.

Q. Wherein consists the Happiness of this Employment?

A. In that it fixes the Mind upon the best and the noblest Objects, upon God, a Being infinite in all Perfections, and upon that Happiness which is placed in the eternal Enjoyment of him, and upon those Methods that are establish'd for the attaining of it. In that it engages Men in the greatest Acts of doing good, in turning Sinners from the Error of their Ways, and by all wise and prudent Means in gaining Souls unto God. In that it sets Men above the low and mean Concerns of this Life; and instead of bodily Labour

Labour confines them to the more delightful Exercises of the Mind. Add to all this, that the faithful and diligent Discharge of the holy Function, gives a Title to a higher Degree of Glory in the next World; for *they that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness as the Stars for ever and ever.* Dan. 12. 3.

Q. *What are the Benefits of the Priesthood?*

A. 'Tis by the Execution of the Priest's Office, that Men are made Members of the Church of Christ by Baptism; and *without being born of Water and of the Spirit, we cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* That our spiritual Life is maintained by the holy Eucharist, for 'tis the *Cup of Blessing which they bless, that is the Communion of the Blood of Christ; it is the Bread which they break, that is the Communion of the Body of Christ.* 1 Cor. 10. 16. That the Pardon of our Sins is signed and sealed to us; for by the Administration of the Sacraments, are the Benefits of Christ's Sacrifice really convey'd to all worthy Receivers. And that our Minds and Consciences are quieted by the Comfort and Benefit of *Abolution.* It is moreover by the faithful Discharge of this high Office, Men are turned from Darkness to Light, convinced of the Folly of their Sins, and of the Necessity of being holy, if ever they will be happy. Besides, that the Good of the State is hereby more secured, in those Instructions Men receive from the Ministers of God, in the necessary Duties of Obedience Justice and Fidelity.

Q. *What has been the general sense of Mankind in reference to the Priesthood?*

A. All Nations, whether learned or ignorant, whether civil or barbarous, have agreed in this

as

as a common dictate of natural Reason, to express their Reverence for the Deity, and their Affections to Religion by conferring extraordinary Privileges of Honour upon such as administer in holy Things, and by providing liberally for their Maintenance.

And that the *Honour* due to the *Holy Function* flows from the *Law of Nature*, appears from hence; that in the eldest Times the *Civil* and the *Sacred Authority*, were united in the same Person. For as the Original of Civil Government was from private Families, so before those Families came to associate for more publick Worship, the *Master* of the *Family* was the *Priest* of it.

Q. How were Priests respected among the Heathens?

A. In all Countries they enjoyed great Marks of Pre-eminence and Power, and managed the most weighty Affairs of Peace and War. Among the *Ægyptians* their Kings were always declared either out of the Priesthood or Soldiery; but he that was chosen out of the Soldiery, was obliged immediately to turn Priest. The *Magi* in *Persia* were Privy-Counsellors to the great Emperors of those Dominions. The *Brachmans* in *India* were exempted from legal Penalties and common Tribute, and in all Difficulties were applied to by Prince and People for their Advice and Prayers. The *Druids*, the *Priests* formerly of this our *Island* as well as of *France* and *Germany*, were in such great esteem that they judged all publick and private Causes, and distributed the main Springs of Obedience, Rewards and Punishments; they never attended the Wars, nor were required to contribute

Plut. de Isid.
& Osir.

Tom. 2.

p. 354.

Strab. Geo.

l. 1. p. 23.

24.

Porphyr. de

Abst. lib. 4.

S. 17.

Cæf. de

Bel. Gal.

lib. 6.

tribute towards the Charge of them, but enjoy'd an universal Immunity. The *Romans*, a wise and valiant People, set so great a value upon the Priestly Order, that if their principal Magistrate by chance met any of *Vesta's* Priests they gave them Place. *Numa Pompilius* who Liv. lib. 1. civilized that warlike Nation, is reported sometimes to have performed the Priest's Office himself. Their *Consuls* sought the high Dignity of *Pontifex Maximus*, and several Emperors after *Augustus's* Time were solemnly admitted to be High-Priests.

Q. How were Priests respected before the giving of the Law?

A. The Character of the Persons who Officiated as Priests before the Law very much tended to support the Honour and Dignity of the Priesthood. For tho' in the first Ages of the World, in what related to a Man's self, it is very probable from the Instances of *Cain* and *Abel*, that every Man was his own Priest; yet it is plain that the Family Sacrifices were performed by the Master of it, who as he exceeded the rest in Power and Authority, so he was thought fittest for that honourable Function. When Families increased and associated together for the more publick Worship of God, the Sacred and the Civil Power were united in the same Person. Thus *Melchizedeck* was King and Priest in *Salem*; and among the *Aegyptians*, as was observed before, the Priesthood was joined with the Crown. The *Greeks* accounted the Priesthood of equal Dignity with Kingship; which is taken notice of by *Aristotle* in several Places of his *Politicks*. And among the *Latins* we have a Testimony from *Virgil*, that at the

Spenc. de
leg. Heb.
Lib. 1. c. 6.
p. 135.

Gen. 8. 10.
12. 7, 8.
35. 3, 7.
Job 1. 5.
42. 8.

Gen. 14.
18.

Plutarch
Quest.
Rom. 113.
De Rep.
Lib. 3.

c. 10, 11.
Æn. 3.

same time *Anius* was both Priest and King. Nay *Moses* himself, who was *Prince* of *Israel*, before *Aaron* was consecrated, officiated as
 Exo. 24.6, Priest in that solemn Sacrifice by which the Co-
 &c. venant with *Israel* was confirmed.

Q. *How were Priests respected under the Law?*

A. Tho' the whole Nation of the *Jews* were, in respect of other Nations, God's peculiar People; yet *Levi* was his peculiar Tribe, his Lot and his *Inheritance*, set apart that they might execute the Service of the Lord; and upon the account of their being devoted to minister in holy things called his *holy Ones*. That God intended great Honour and Authority should be conferred upon the *Priests*, may appear plainly from the Power he gave them to interpret the Law, and to decide doubtful Cases; and from those severe Punishments he threatens to bring on such as did not comply with their Determinations. And as for the *High-Priest*, his Garments, his Palace, his place in the *Sanhedrim*, and upon other Occasions, sufficiently shew the Dignity of his Office and the Authority he was invested with. The Laws that God was pleased yet farther to give in relation to the Priesthood, tended to preserve the *Character* from being contemptible, for any corporal Blemish made a Man unfit for it; and the particular Directions concerning their Marriages, and their not mourning for their nearest Kindred, made their Persons still more eminent. But what chiefly contributed to their *Honour*, was the Law about *first Fruits* and *Tenths*, which were solemnly dedicated to God, and yet were to be brought to the Temple for the Maintenance of the *Priests*.

Q. *Why*

Q. *Why was the Priesthood confined to one Tribe?*

A. 'Tis thought that the chief Reason why God confined the Priesthood under the Law to one Tribe, was the better to train up the *Jews* in the Knowledge and Worship of the true God, and to preserve them from the Idolatrous Rites of their Neighbours, to which they were but too much addicted. For this was a certain Sign that Sacrifices, offered to him by any other Hands were neither agreeable nor acceptable to him; because this testified that the Church of God was restrained to one People. So long therefore as none could administer in holy things but those of the Tribe of *Levi*, so long there could be no Church but of that People whereof *Levi* was a Tribe.

Q. *Why was Levi preferred to this great Honour before any of the other Tribes?*

A. Not only because this Tribe was distinguish'd by its Relation to *Moses*, who was Prince of the Congregation, and whom God thought fit farther to Honour by advancing his Father's House to the highest pitch of Dignity mortal Man could attain to; but also because this Tribe had given the most famous Instances of their Zeal against Idolatry. When the *Israelites* worshipp'd the golden Calf, the greatest part of the *Levites* preserved themselves free from that Infection. When *Moses* took Vengeance on Exod. 32. those that were guilty of that Idolatry, the *Le-* 25, 29. *vites* being kindled with Zeal, were obedient to his Voice; and assisted in expiating the Guilt of so great a Sin, with the Blood of their own Kindred. And if we may believe the *Jewish* Spen. de leg. Heb. lib. 1. c. 6. p. 138. *Rabbins*, when the other Tribes were tainted

with the Superstitions of *Ægypt*, the Tribe of *Levi* kept constant to the Worship of God; whereupon God was pleased *thus* to reward that Fidelity and Zeal, for which they were so renowned.

Q. What Instances are there in the Old Testament, of honourable Persons exercising the Priesthood?

Gen. 14. *A. Melchisedek*, who exercised that holy Function, was *King* as well as *Priest*, and the Patriarch *Abraham* acknowledged his Superiority by receiving his Benediction, and by paying him
Heb. 7. 4. Tribute, even the *Tenth of all his Spoils.* *Potiphar* Priest of *On* was so considerable as to
Gen. 41. 45. marry his Daughter to *Joseph*, the great Favorite of the King of *Ægypt.* *Jethro* Priest of
Exod. 3. 1. *Midian* was Father-in-Law to *Moses*, eminent for his Wisdom and Authority. And the High-Priest *Aaron* was Brother to the same *Moses*
Acts 7. 22. who was so mighty in Words and Deeds.

Q. How was the Priesthood esteemed among the Primitive Christians?

A. The Primitive Christians always express a mighty Value and Esteem for their *Clergy*; because they were sensible there could be no Church without Priests, and that it was by their means that God conveyed to them all those mighty Blessings that were purchased by Christ's Death. Ecclesiastical History is full of Instances of the Respect they then paid to their *Bishops* and *Presbyters*, by kissing their Hands, bowing to beg their Blessing, and all this even in the times of Persecution. They gave all imaginable proof of a sincere and hearty Love to their Persons, by maintaining them liberally out of their shipwreck'd Fortunes, and chearfully submitting to the

the severe Discipline enjoyed by them; and all this from a Sense of that Authority they had received from Christ the great Bishop of Souls; and in pursuance of those Precepts our Saviour Luk. 10. 16. and St. Paul have left us in this matter. When 1 Thes. 4. 8. Christianity became the Religion of the Government, great Honours and Revenues were bestowed upon the Clergy, not only for the support of Religion, but as a Reward for those great Sufferings they had undergone in defence of the Truth; all Laws that were any ways prejudicial to them were revoked, and new ones made to secure to them Respect and Maintenance; which Advantages in progress of time were increased by the Favour of pious Princes, not only in the Roman Empire, but in all other Nations where Christianity prevailed.

Q. What Titles of Honour and Respect are given to those who are invested with the Priesthood, under the Gospel?

A. The Dignity of their Office is amply displayed in the Scriptures, when those that are invested with that Character are called the *Ministers of Christ, Stewards of the Mysteries of God*, to whom he hath committed the Word of 1 Cor. 4. 1. Reconciliation, the Glory of Christ, *Ambassadors for Christ, in Christ's stead, Co-workers with him, Angels of the Churches.* And when Tit. 1. 7. it is moreover declared that he that *despiset* 2 Cor. 5. 19. *them*, despiseth not Man but God. All which 8. 23. Titles shew upon how many Accounts they 2 Cor. 5. 20. stand related, appropriated and devoted to God Rev. c. 2. himself. Luk. 10. 16.

Q. What is implied in their being Ministers of Christ?

A. That they act by Commission from him,
Hh 3 that

that they are his Officers and immediate Attendants, his Domesticks, and in a peculiar manner his Servants. That they are employed in his particular Business, impowered and authorized to negotiate and transact for God, and that not only in some particular thing, but at large in all the outward Administration of the Covenant of Grace, or of Reconciliation between God and Man.

Q. What is implied in their being Stewards of the Mysteries of God?

A. That as a Steward is the highest domestick Officer and Governour of the whole Family, who is to give them their Portion of Meat in due Season; so the Priests under the Gospel are instituted to dispense spiritual Food for the Nourishment of Christians, to feed them with God's
 1 Cor. 2.7. *holy Word and Sacraments; to speak the hidden Wisdom which God ordained before the World; which is committed to their care to preserve entire from being maimed or perverted, as the Sacraments are to be rightly and duly administered.*

Q. What is implied in their being publick Agents and Ambassadors?

A. That they are God's Vicegerents and visible Representatives here upon Earth, that they are delegated by him to sollicite and maintain a good Correspondence between God and Man; that they are empowered to administer the Word of Reconciliation, to sign and seal Covenants in his Name; upon which Account their Persons are sacred, and all Contempt shewn to them, is an Affront to their Master, whose Character they bear.

Q. What

Q. What is implied in their being the Glory of Christ and Co-workers with him?

A. That they are Instrumental in advancing his Gospel, whereby Christ's Name is glorified; that they manage and carry on that glorious Design for which he came into the World, and took upon him our Nature; that they are the Ministers of his spiritual Kingdom, to whose Diligence and Fidelity is committed its Preservation and Enlargement.

Q. Why are the Ministers of God called the Clergy?

A. Because that Order of Men, that have been peculiarly appropriated to the Service of God, and devoted to wait at the Altar, have always been esteemed God's *Lot* and *Inheritance* which the word signifies in the Greek. Thus God says, the *Levite shall be mine*; and our Saviour calls his *Apostles the Gift of his Father* Num. 8.14. John 17.6. *gave him out of the World.* Now though the word at first comprehended the whole Body of the Jewish Nation, and may in the same sense be attributed to the Community of Christians, whom God has purchased to himself as a peculiar People; yet this Title was afterwards confined to narrower Bounds, and distinguish'd that *Tribe* that God made choice of to stand before him in the Administration of holy things; and after the Expiration of that Oeconomy, was accordingly used to denote the Ministry of the Gospel, and those that were invested with the Priesthood in the Christian Church.

Q. How do the Ministers of the Christian Church derive their Commission?

A. From our Saviour Jesus Christ the great Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls, *who glorifi-* Heb. 5. 5.

ed not himself to be an High-Priest; but had his Commission from God the Father, and after his Resurrection, invested his Apostles with the same
 Joh.20.21, *Commission his Father had given him. As my*
 22, &c. *Father hath sent me, even so send I you, and he breathed on them, and said unto them, receive you the Holy Ghost, &c. Which Commission, evidently contains an Authority of ordaining others, and a Power of transferring that Commission upon others, and those upon others to the end of the World. And that this did not meerly belong to the Persons of the Apostles, appears from the Nature of that Promise made to be with them always, even to the end of the World; which must include their Successors in the Execution of the same Commission.*
 Mat.28.20.

Q. Can the Supreme, Civil Magistrate communicate these spiritual Powers to Church Officers?

A. The Nature of these Powers being purely spiritual, and having a Relation to the Souls of Men; can only be conveyed in that way and manner Christ has appointed; who delegated these Powers only to his Apostles and their Successors; and without his express Commission, no Man ought to take upon himself, or communicate to others a Power to sign and seal Covenants in his Name. This Commission, the Apostles and their Successors exercised in all Places, and even in Opposition to the Rulers that then were; so that the Church subsisted as a distinct Society from the State for above three hundred Years, when the Civil Government was only concerned to suppress and destroy it. Indeed when the Church received the Benefit of Incorporation and Protection from the State, she
 was

was content to suffer some Limitations as to the Exercise of these Powers, and thought her self sufficiently recompensed by the Advantages that accrued to her by the Incorporation.

Q. Wherein then consists the Supremacy of Sovereign Magistrates?

A. In ruling all Estates and Degrees committed to their Charge by God, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Temporal. Artic. 37. In exercising their Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes, as well as over Ecclesiastical Persons, and in *restraining with the Civil Sword the Stubborn and Evil-doers.* So that all Persons in their Dominions, *Spiritual as well as Temporal*, are subject to their Authority; because, when Men became Ministers in the Church, they did not cease to be Subjects of the State. *Every Soul must be subject to the higher Powers,* which includes an *Apostle, an Evangelist, a Prophet, or whosoever else,* as *St. Chrysostom* observes upon the Place. But by Vertue of this Supremacy, the *ministring either of God's Word, or of the Sacraments,* is not given to Princes, because they are not invested with, nor have a Sovereign disposal of the Power of Orders. Rom. 13.1. Artic. 37.

Q. What may we learn from the Dignity of the Priesthood?

A. That it is no Diminution to greatness of Birth, or any personal Excellency, to be devoted to the Service of the Altar. That great purity of Life is required of those that are invested with such an honourable Character, whereby they may in some measure be qualified to administer in holy things, and by their Example guide those they instruct by their Doctrine. That it is an Argument of a very prophane Temper, to contemn those that are owned by God as his Domestic sticks

sticks and immediate *Attendants*, as his *Agents* and *Ambassadors*, because he that despiseth them, despiseth him that sent them; and the Affront put upon them will be interpreted as done to him from whom they derive their Commission. That it is a dictate of natural Reason to testify our Reverence to the Deity, and our Affection to Religion, by honouring those who are the chief Ministers of it. That it is the greatest piece of Presumption imaginable, to pretend to sign and seal Covenants in God's Name, without receiving any Power and Authority from him in order to that purpose. That the *Attendance* at the *Altar* exempts no Man from the *Cognizance* of the *Civil Powers*, but that *spiritual Persons* are equally obliged to pay all *Duty* and *Allegiance* to their *rightful Sovereigns*, as well as the meanest of the Laity. That the Power of the *Magistrate*, when most full and absolute, does not extend either to use themselves, or communicate to others those spiritual Powers which Christ left only to his Apostles, and their Successors. That we then best shew our esteem of *God's Ordinance*, and testify our Value for the *Benefits* of the *Priesthood*, when we not only reverence their Persons, but devoutly attend their *spiritual Administrations*.

THE PRAYERS.

I.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who hast purchased to thy self an universal Church by the precious Blood of thy dear Son: Mercifully look upon the same, and at this time

so guide and govern the Minds of thy Servants, the Bishops and Pastors of thy Flock, that they may lay Hands suddenly on no Man; but faithfully and wisely make choice of fit Persons, to serve thee in the sacred Ministry of thy Church. And to those which shall be ordained to any holy Function, give thy Grace and heavenly Benediction, that both by their Life and Doctrine, they may set forth thy Glory, and set forward the Salvation of all Men, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

GRant, O Lord, that all those who administer in holy things may have a great Sense of the Dignity and Importance of their Office; that since they are thy *Embassadors*, they may in all their Actions have a due regard to the Excellency of their Character, and faithfully, diligently and prudently transact those great Affairs thou hast entrusted to their Management. That since they are thy *Ministers*, they may have always imprinted in their Remembrance, how great a Treasure is committed to their Charge, the Sheep of Christ, which he bought with his Death, and for whom he shed his Blood, that the Church and Congregation whom they serve is the Spouse and Body of Christ. That since they are the *Stewards* of thy *Mysteries*, they may feed and provide for thy Family, seek thy Sheep that are dispersed abroad, and thy Children which are in the midst of this naughty World; that they may be saved through Christ. That since they are *Labourers* in thy *Vineyard*, they may never cease by their Care and Diligence to bring all such as are committed to their Charge,
unto

unto that Agreement in Faith and Knowledge of God, and to that ripeness and perfectness of Age in Christ, that there may be no place left for Error in Religion, or for Viciousness of Life. That since their Employment is laborious and difficult, they may constantly pray for the heavenly Assistance of the Holy Ghost, from thee, O Father, by the Mediation of our blessed Redeemer and Saviour Jesus Christ; that by daily reading and weighing of the Scriptures they may wax riper and stronger in their Ministry, and so fashion their Lives, and those of their Families, after the Rules and Doctrine of Christ, that they may be wholesome and godly Examples for the rest of the Congregation to follow, and be able to give a good Account of their Stewardship at the Tribunal of Christ; to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, World without end. *Amen.*

III.

B^p Taylor.

O Thou great Shepherd, and Bishop of our Souls, most glorious Jesu, bless all holy and religious Prelates, especially the Bishops of our Church. O God, let abundance of thy Grace and Benediction descend upon their Heads, that by a holy Life, by a true and catholick Belief, by a confident Confession of thy Name, and by a Fatherly Care, and great Sedulity and Watchfulness over their Flock, they may glorifie thee our God, the great Lover of Souls, and set forward the Salvation of their People, and of others by their Example, and at last after a plentiful Conversion of Souls, they may shine like the Stars in Glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

C H A P.

C H A P. IX.

The Vigils.

Q. *What do you mean by Vigils?*

A. Those *Fasts* which the Church has thought fit to establish before certain *Festivals*, in order to prepare our Minds for a due Observation of the ensuing *Solemnity*: That so our Joy may not degenerate into Sensuality, nor be express'd by Intemperance, nor evaporate into Lightness and Vanity; but that we may use God's good Creatures with Moderation and Thankfulness, with Bowels of Mercy to those that are in want, and raise our Souls to such a Relish of spiritual Enjoyments, that it may be our Meat and Drink to do the Will of our heavenly Father.

Q. *Why are these Fasts called Vigils?*

A. From the Latin Word *Vigilia*, signifying *Watchings*. It being the Custom in the Primitive Times to pass great part of the Night that preceded certain *Holy-days* in Devotion and religious Exercises; and this even in those Places which they set apart for the publick Worship of God. But when these *Night Meetings* came to be so far abused, that no Care could prevent several Disorders and Irregularities, the Church thought fit to abolish them, and these *Night Watches* were converted into *Fasts*, still keeping the former Name of *Vigils*?

Q. *What was probably the Original of these Vigils or Night Watches among Christians?*

A. Some are inclined to found this Practice upon

upon several Texts of Scripture understood literally, where *Watching* is enjoined as well as
 Mat. 24. 42. 25. 13. *Prayer*, particularly upon that Conclusion our Saviour draws from the *Parable of the ten Virgins*; *Watch therefore, for you know neither the Day nor the Hour wherein the Son of Man cometh*. And farther, they urge our Saviour's own
 Mar. 13. 35. Example, *who continued all Night in Prayer alone*; and that of St. Paul and Silas, who at
 Luke 6. 12. *Midnight prayed and sang Praises unto God*. And what wonder if in this Sense it was practised and recommended by the Christians of the first Age, who generally apprehended that the *end of the World* was near at hand, and that their blessed Master would quickly summon them to appear before his dreadful Tribunal, and that
 Acts 16. 25. at *Midnight the Cry would be made, behold the Bridegroom cometh*. The Fervour and pious Zeal of those times might easily dispose them under such Thoughts, to abridge themselves of Sleep, and to employ part of the Night in prosecuting the Affairs of their eternal Salvation, that if possible the *Coming of the Son of Man* might find them actually engaged in the Expectation of it. And were the *Children of Light* as wise in their Generation as the *Children of this World*, they would sometimes borrow from the Night for the Exercise of their Devotion; when the *others*, to gratifie their Passions, can dedicate whole Nights to their Business or Pleasure.

Q. *What farther account is there of the Original of Vigils?*

A. Others with greater Probability have referred the Rise of these *Night Watches* to the Necessity Christians were under of meeting in the *Night* and *before Day* for the Exercise of their

their Devotions in common, by reason of the Malice and Persecution of their Enemies, who endeavoured their Destruction when they discovered them to be Christians. Thus the *Disciples of our Lord were assembled together in the Evening*, the Doors being shut for fear of the *Jews*, when our Saviour appeared to them, and shewed them his Hands and his Side. When St. Peter was delivered out of Prison by an Angel in the *Night*, he found the Church of *Jerusalem* assembled in the House of *Mary Mother of John* surnamed *Mark*, performing the publick Offices of Religion. St. Paul at *Troas* continued his *Speech until Midnight*, and then administered the Sacrament to the Disciples, who came together to break Bread. In the after-Ages *Tertullian* confirms the Custom of frequenting the Assemblies for religious Worship, and of receiving the *Eucharist before Day*; and in the account *Pliny* gives to the Emperor concerning the Christians, their meeting before Day to sing Hymns to our Saviour, &c. makes a part of it. Now when Persecution ceased, and Christians had the Liberty of performing their Devotions in a more publick manner, they still continued these *Night Watches* before great Festivals, particularly that of *Easter*, as is owned by several of the Ancients. This Practice was in great vigour in the time of St. *Jerome*, who defended these *Vigils* against the Objections of *Vigilantius* that endeavoured to have them abolished. But St. *Jerome* declares it unreasonable to impute to the whole Body the unhappy Miscarriages of some unworthy Members among them; because the Irregularities of a few could not prejudice Religion in general, since they were guilty

Joh. 20. 19.

Acts 12. 12.

Acts 20. 7. & 10.

De Coron. c. 3.

Lib. 10. Epist. 97.

Tertul. ad ux. lib. 2.
Euseb. de vit. Constan. lib. 4.
Nazian. Orat. in S. Pas.
Ambros. Sermon. 60.
Hierom. ad Ripar. ad ver. Vigil.
lan.

Can. 35.

guilty of the same Crimes in their own Houses and in their Neighbourhood, the *Vigils* being neither the Cause nor the Occasion of these Disorders. The Council of *Eleberis*, held *An. 305*, had forbid the Admission of Women, to prevent the ill Consequences of these promiscuous Assemblies; but they were not abolished till after *St. Jerome's* time, not as some think till the beginning of the *sixth* Century.

Q. Before what Festivals has the Church appointed these Fasts that are called Vigils?

A. Before the Nativity of our Lord, the Purification and Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Easter-day, Ascension-day, Pentecost, St. Matthias, St. John Baptist, St. Peter, St. James, St. Bartholomew, St. Matthew, St. Simon and St. Jude, St. Thomas, St. Andrew, All-Saints. And if any of these Feasts fall upon a Munday, then the Vigil or Fast-day shall be kept upon the Saturday, and not upon the Sunday next before it.

Q. Why have not the rest of the Festivals, Vigils annexed to them?

A. Because they chiefly fall between Christmas and Epiphany, or between Easter and Whitsunday, which were always esteemed such Seasons for rejoicing, that the Church did not think fit, but very rarely, to intermingle with them any Days of Fasting and Humiliation. And in the Feast of St. Michael and All-Angels, one Reason for the Institution of Vigils ceases; which was to conform us to the Example of the Saints, who through Sufferings and Mortifications entered into the Joy of their Master, but these ministring Spirits were created in the full Possession of Bliss.

Q. What

Q. What are those Acts of publick Worship which these Vigils were designed to prepare us for?

A. Joining in those Prayers and Praises which are offered up to God by his *Ministers* upon such Occasions. Hearing God's *Holy Word*, and those Explanations of it, and Instructions from it, which are commonly called *Sermons*, made by an *Order* of Men established, among other Ends, to instruct us in our Duty. Receiving the *blessed Sacrament*, which is called the *Eucharist*, because a thankful Acknowledgment of Blessings received. A very fit Employment for all *Festivals*, as well as the proper Christian Worship for the *Lord's Day*.

Q. With what Dispositions of Mind ought we to perform these Acts of publick Worship?

A. With sincere Intentions of glorifying God, and making his Honour and Praise known among Men; acknowledging hereby our entire Dependence upon his Bounty, both for what we enjoy and what we farther expect. And with hearty Endeavours of performing his blessed Will, and of being that in our Lives and Actions, which we beg to be made in our Prayers, which we are enjoined in his *holy Word*, and which we solemnly promise in the *holy Sacrament*.

Q. With what Reverence of our Bodies ought we to perform these Acts of publick Worship?

A. Tho' in our *private* Devotions we are left I think at liberty to chuse such Postures as may most tend to the fixing of our Minds; yet in *publick* we are obliged to govern our outward Behaviour by such Measures as the Church prescribes, *viz.* to *kneel, stand, bow or sit*, as the *Rubrick* has enjoined. Neither do I think it is fit to deviate

from some devout Customs, tho' not commanded, that are establish'd by ancient and general Practice, which in time come to have the Force of a Law. It is by these Rules that a beautiful Uniformity is created in our Deportment as well as in our Petitions. All these different *Postures* ought to be used with such *Gravity* and Seriousness as may demonstrate how intent we are when engaged in the Worship of God, and yet without such Affectations and Particularities as are apt to disturb those that are near us, and to give Occasion to others to suspect us as acting a formal hypocritical part. If we come to Church before the Service begins, which we should always endeavour to do, after we have performed our private Devotions, we should in Silence recollect our selves, and dispose our Minds by serious Thoughts to a due discharge of the ensuing Duties; for the Discourses of *News* and *Business* are very improper upon such Occasions, God's House being not designed for the Scene of Conversation. And it is still much more *unbecoming* while we are at our Prayers, nicely to observe all those Rules of Ceremony, which in other Places are fit and necessary to be practised towards one another; because when we are offering our Requests to the great God of Heaven and Earth, our Attention should be so fixt, that we should have no leisure to regard any thing else. To this end, when we put our Bodies into a *praying Posture*, with which I think leaning and lolling seems very inconsistent, we should do well to fix our Eyes downwards, that we may not be diverted by any Objects near us; at the same time resolving not to suffer them to gaze about, whereby they do but fetch in Matter for wandering

ing Thoughts. A farther Help to this Attention is great Silence; therefore we should never joyn aloud with the *Minister* but where it is enjoyned, endeavouring to make it our own by a hearty *Amen*. Great care must be taken not to repeat after the Minister what peculiarly relates to his Office; which I mention the rather, because I have frequently observed some devout People following him that Officiates in the *Exhortation* and *Absolution*, as well as the *Confession*; which if thoroughly considered, must be judged a very absurd and improper Expression of the Peoples Devotion, because a distinguishing part of the *Priest's* Office?

Q. *What Preparation of Mind is necessary for our joyning in the publick Prayers?*

A. To abstract our Thoughts as much as we can from our worldly Business and Concerns, that we may call upon God with Attention and Application of Soul. To keep our Passions in Order and Subjection, that none of them may interrupt us when we approach the Throne of Grace. To possess our Minds with such an awful Sense of God's Presence, that we may behave our selves with Gravity and Reverence; to work in our selves such a Sense of our own Weakness and Insufficiency, as may make us earnest for the Supplies of supernatural Grace; such a Sorrow for our Sins, such Humiliation for them, and such a readiness to forgive others; as may prevail upon God for the sake of Christ's Sufferings to forgive us. To recollect those many Blessings that we have received, that we may shew forth his Praise; not only with our Lips but in our Lives, by giving up our selves to his Service.

A more particular Account of Prayer, and the necessary Qualifications to make it an acceptable Sacrifice, may be found in the *Chapter on Rogation Days*.

Q. How ought we to hear the Word of God read and preach'd to us?

A. With a Resolution of Mind to perform what we shall be convinc'd is our Duty; and with such a Submission of our Understandings as is due to the Oracles of God. With a particular Application of general Instructions to the State of our own Minds, that we may grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In order to this, we should give our Attention with great Reverence, and
Luke 8. 18. take heed how we hear, lest our Negligence be interpreted as a Contempt of that Authority that speaks to us.

Q. How comes it to pass, that among those that hear God's holy Word read and preach'd to them, so few are influenc'd thereby to reform their Lives?

A. It chiefly proceeds from the strength of vicious Habits, which blind their Understandings, and indispose them to apprehend the force of such Arguments as are urged, to expose the Folly of Sin, and the mischievous Consequence of a wicked Life; where Mens Affections are engaged, their Judgments are strangely perverted; this makes them stifle the Checks of their Consciences, and quench those Sparks of Piety that were kindled in their Education. When therefore Curiosity or Decency engages them to hear a Sermon, they fix their Attention upon the Ornaments of the Discourse, and find fault with the manner of the Composition, when their Thoughts

Thoughts never dwell upon the main Subject recommended. But when Men have long resisted the Solicitations of *God's Ministers*, he may justly give them up to a reprobate Sense, and withdraw that Grace which they have abused; and then 'tis no wonder they turn the most serious things into *Ridicule*, and hear the *Terrors of the Lord* without the least Emotion.

Q. But why do not the good Desires that are raised in some People's Minds by hearing God's Word produce the Fruit of Vertue in their Conversations?

A. Because many imagine when they have been affected with a Sermon, that the great end of Hearing is fulfilled; when, alas! the main Matter, which is the putting useful Instructions into practice, is still behind. God indeed has done his part when he enlightens our Minds, but then 'tis our business to walk as Children of the Light. Others suffer the Cares and Pleasures of this Life to destroy the good Seed that is sown in their Hearts; they apply their Minds so immediately to other Objects, that even the Memory of those good Impressions is erased. Some find their evil Habits so strong that they despair of conquering them, and therefore are discouraged in prosecuting the Convictions of their own Consciences; but a mighty Resolution with the Assistance of God's Grace, will overcome great Difficulties; and 'tis a good sign God will enable us to perform our Duty, when he so earnestly solicits us to undertake it. Others sink under a Sense of their own Weakness, and fearing they shall not persevere, abandon an Enterprize which they think themselves not able to go through with. But *Perseverance* is a *Gift of God*,

I i 3

God, which he ordinarily bestows on those that are not wanting to themselves, and who depend upon him in the Use of all those Means which
 2 Pet. I. 10. he has established for the *making their Calling and Election sure.*

Q. How ought we to prepare our selves to receive the holy Sacrament?

A. They who have never received the *Holy Sacrament*, ought to inform themselves carefully in the *Nature and End* of this *sacred Institution*, what is meant by this *holy Action*, to what Purpose it was ordain'd, what Benefits and Advantages may be expected from it. This necessary Knowledge once attained, and which may be compassed without great Difficulty, is a standing Qualification in all our future Communion. And as for all other pious Dispositions of Mind which make us fit Guests at the *Lord's Table*, they are the same we are obliged to by our *Baptismal Vow*, and are necessary in the Course of a Christian Life, and in the use of all other Means of Grace; for except we confess our Sins with an humble, penitent and obedient Heart, and are ready to forgive those that have offended us, and ask with Faith, even our Prayers and Praises will find no acceptance at the Throne of Grace. The best Preparation for the Sacrament, is a constant endeavour to live as becomes Christians; for they who really believe the Christian Religion, and sincerely resolve to govern their Lives by the Doctrines of the Gospel, have all that substantial Preparation that qualifies Men to partake in this holy Ordinance; and ought to receive, at any time when there is an opportunity, tho' they were not before-hand acquainted with it. Indeed when they have a Foresight
 of

of their communicating, 'tis very advisable they should trim their Lamps, examine the state of their Minds, renew their Repentance, exercise their Charity, enlarge their Devotions, spiritualize their Affections; and in order to this should retire from Business and Pleasure, that by Prayer and Fasting and Alms-deeds, their Minds may be raised to relish spiritual Enjoyments; but still great care must be taken, when a Man is habitually prepared, that he does not impose upon himself so much actual Preparation as shall make him lose an Opportunity of receiving the Sacrament, when he has not had time to go through with that Method he has prescribed to himself.

Q. *What makes a Man absolutely unfit to receive the holy Sacrament?*

A. The living in the constant habitual Practice of any known Sin, without Repentance; such a Man's Approach to the *holy Table* would be a mocking of God, and a great contempt of his Authority; and tho' the ancient *Discipline* of the Church is at a low ebb among us, yet there is still Power to debar such scandalous and open Sinners the holy Communion, and a particular Order to *Parochial Ministers* not to admit such. And this *Impenitence* makes our Prayers also an Abomination to the Lord; for to profess our selves sorry for our Sins, and resolved to forsake them, when we have no sense of the one, nor are determined to do the other, is the greatest Affront imaginable to our Maker, by supposing either that he does not know our Hearts, or that he will be pleased when we draw near to him with our Lips, tho' our Hearts are far from him.

Can. 26.

Q. *What is that unworthy receiving and the*
 I Cor. II. Punishment of it, taken notice of by St. Paul in
 29. *his Epistle to the Corinthians?*

A. The Crime charged upon them by St. Paul
 V. 18, 20, was their disorderly and irreverent Participation
 21. of the blessed Sacrament; for it being the Custom of the Primitive Christians to receive the *holy Eucharist* after their *Feasts of Charity*, wherein the Rich and the Poor ate together with great Sobriety and Temperance; in the Church of *Corinth* this Method was not observed, the Poor were not admitted to this common Feast, for in
 V. 21. *eating every one taketh before other his own Supper*; so that when some wanted, others were guilty of *scandalous Excess* and *gross Intemperance*; and the Effect of it was, that they did
 V. 29. not *discern the Lord's Body*, they made no difference between the Sacrament and a common Meal, between what was to sustain their Bodies and what was to refresh their Souls. And the Punishment inflicted upon them for this irreverent and contemptuous Usage of the *Body and Blood of Christ* was temporal Judgments, that *being chastened of the Lord*, they might not be *condemned with the World*; for *this cause many*
 V. 32. *were weak and sickly among them, and many slept*. They had provoked God to plague them with divers Diseases and sundry kinds of Death; by which it appears that temporal Judgments must be understood by that word our Translators render *Damnation*. Tho' if these temporal Judgments had not produced Amendment and Reformation, such a contempt of holy Things might have made them obnoxious to the eternal Judgment of God.

Q. *But does not the Danger of unworthy receiving*

receiving *make it safest to abstain from receiving at all, or at least to receive but seldom?*

A. By no means; because the Danger of neglecting and contemning a plain Command of our Saviour, is more hazardous to our Salvation than performing it without some due Qualification. The Duty therefore being necessary to be performed, the true Consequence we should draw from the Danger of performing it unworthily, should be to excite our selves to great Care and Diligence in preparing our selves for the due discharge of it; but never to delude our selves by false Reasons to such a neglect as will certainly increase our Condemnation.

Q. *What Obligation lies upon all Christians to receive the holy Communion?*

A. The plain and positive Command of our blessed Saviour *to do this in remembrance of him*, Luk. 22. 19. makes it a necessary and perpetual Duty incumbent upon all Christians; and to live in the neglect of a plain Law of the Author of our Religion, is no way consistent with the Character we profess of being his Disciples. The Circumstances of this Institution still bind us to have a great regard to it; for it was the last Command of our best Friend and great Benefactor, when he was about to *lay down his Life* for our sakes. 'Tis a piece of Worship peculiar to the Christian Religion, and by which in a particular manner we proclaim our selves Followers of the blessed Jesus; upon which account the primitive Christians (at least in some places) on no Day held their publick Assemblies without it; and the Faithful that joined in all the other parts of publick Worship, never failed in partaking of the blessed Sacrament. If we add to this the Benefits that

that are conveyed to all worthy Receivers in this holy Ordinance, viz. the Pardon of our Sins, Grace and Strength to perform our Duty, and the glorious Reward of eternal Life; a Man must be very insensible of his own Interest, that neglects one of the best Instruments to advance it. Neither can he have any deep Sense of those great Blessings that were purchased for us by the Death of Christ, when he refuses to give such an easie Instance of a thankful Heart.

Q. What was the End and Design of instituting the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper?

Mede's
Christian
Sacrifice.

Commu.
Rub.
Mendoz. in
Can. 22.
Conc. Illib.

A. To be the *Christian Sacrifice*, wherein Bread and Wine are offered to God, to acknowledge him Lord of the Creatures; and accordingly in the *ancient Church* they were laid on the Table by the *Priest*, as they are still order'd to be done by the *Rubrick* in the Church of *England*, and tendred to God by this short Prayer, *Lord, we offer thy own out of what thou hast bountifully given us*; which by *Consecration* being made *Symbols* of the *Body* and *Blood* of *Christ*, we thereby represent to God the Father the *Passion* of his Son; to the end he may for his sake, according to the Tenour of his Covenant in him, be favourable and propitious to us miserable Sinners. That as *Christ intercedes* continually for us in Heaven, by *presenting* his Death and Satisfaction to his Father, so the Church on Earth in like manner may approach the Throne of Grace, by *representing Christ* unto his Father in these *holy Mysteries* of his Death and Passion. To be a standing Monument of the infinite Love of our blessed Saviour in dying for us; and by outward Signs, as eating Bread and drinking Wine, according to Christ's own Appointment,

pointment, to fix in our Souls the Memory of those invaluable Blessings he has purchased for us. And to communicate to all worthy Receivers the Benefits of his Sacrifice; upon which account 'tis called the *Communion* of his *Body* and *Blood*. And it was farther designed as a Bond of Union to knit Christians together in the same Fellowship and Communion. Thus the infinite Love of Christ appeared not only in giving himself to die for us, but in so far complying with the Weakness of our Nature, as to institute and ordain holy Mysteries as Pledges of his Love, and for a continual Remembrance of his Death, to our great and endless Comfort.

Q. After what manner was the Consecration of the Elements of Bread and Wine performed in the primitive Church?

A. The Priest that officiated, not only rehearsed the Evangelical History of the Institution of this Holy Sacrament, and pronounced those words of our Saviour, this is my Body, this is my Blood; but he offered up a Prayer of Consecration to God, beseeching him, that he Iren. l. 4. c. 34. l. 5.
would send down his Holy Spirit upon the Bread c. 2.
and Wine presented to him on the Altar, and Basil. de Spir. San. Tom. 2. c. 27.
that he would so sanctifie them, that they might Cyr. Hier. Cat. Myst. 5. §. 5.
become the Body and Blood of his Son Jesus
Christ; not according to the gross Compages or
Substance, but as to the spiritual Energy and
Vertue of his Holy Flesh and Blood, communi-
cated to the blessed Elements by the Power and
Operation of the Holy Ghost descending upon
them; whereby the Body and Blood of Christ is Chur. Cat.
verily and indeed taken by the Faithful in the
Lord's Supper. This Prayer is found in all the
ancient

Ritu. Græc. ancient Liturgies ; and some learned Men have
 Grab. in thought that St. Paul alluded to something of
 Just. Apol. this nature, when he speaks of the *Offering* of
 1. p. 227. the *Gentiles* being made *acceptable* by the *San-*
 Rom. 15. *ctification* of the *Holy Ghost*.
 16.

Q. *What is meant by the Remembrance of Christ's Death ?*

A. A most *thankful Acknowledgment* of those great Blessings which he purchased for us by his Sufferings ; and a publick proclaiming to all the World, the great sense we have of such invaluable Kindness. *Heartly Repentance* for all the Sins we have been guilty of in thought, word and deed ; for this was the end of his Death,
 Acts 3. 26. to reconcile us to God by *turning us from our Iniquities*. Firm *Resolutions* of better Obedi-
 Tit. 2. 14. ence ; for he gave himself for us *to purifie to himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works*. Entire *Resignation* of our Souls and Bodies to be a reasonable, holy and lively Sacrifice unto him ; for he has the justest claim to us, because
 1 Pet. 1. 19. he *purchased us* at the price of his *own Blood*. A constant *Endeavour* to make some considerable Proficiency in all the Vertues of a Christian Life ; because he has obtained for us, by the Merits of his Sufferings, the Grace and Assistance
 Phil. 2. 12. of God's holy Spirit, to work in us *both to will and to do of his good Pleasure*. A readiness to be reconciled to all those that have offended us,
 Rom. 5. 10. because *when we were Enemies we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son*. And lastly, the Remembrance of his Love in dying for us, should engage us to contribute all we can to the relief of his poor distressed Members, by reason he was so liberal of his inestimable Blood for us.

Q. *How*

Q. How often ought we to receive the holy Communion?

A. The truest Measure of our Duty in this particular is to be taken from those Opportunities which the good Providence of God affords us to this purpose; there being no better way of determining the Frequency of our Obligation to receive, than this of God's giving us the Opportunity. According to this Rule the *Primitive Christians* practised, who never withdrew themselves from the Lord's Supper, when it made a part of the publick Worship. And it is in the Communion of the Sacrament, as it is in the Communion of Prayers and other parts of publick Worship, we are bound to join in them when Opportunities offer for the performing them, and we are not otherwise lawfully hindered. Whoever therefore shall neglect to communicate, and withdraws himself from the Lord's Supper, when that heavenly Banquet is prepared, either does not thoroughly understand his Duty in this particular, or is very defective in the Performance of it. For as the Exhortation before the Communion suggests to us, *who would not think it a great Injury and Wrong done to him, if he had prepared a rich Feast, and decked his Table with all kind of Provision, so that there lacked nothing but the Guests to sit down, and yet that they who were called, without any cause, should most unthankfully refuse to come?* And how can it be imagined that a Man has a true Love for his Saviour, or a grateful sense of his Sufferings, that shall refuse to make a thankful Remembrance of them, when our Saviour has commanded it, and the Providence of God offers him the Opportunity.

Q. But

Q. But may not Men of great Business either in publick or private Affairs be justly excused from frequent Communion ?

A. Any Business, tho' lawful in its own Nature, yet if prosecuted to such a degree as to take Men off from the care of their Souls, ought to be laid aside, because the Salvation of our Souls is of much greater Consequence than any Affair that relates to this World. But yet a great deal of Business is consistent with the Duties of Religion, provided we govern our Affairs by Christian Principles; for tho' such Men have not Leisure for so much actual Preparation, yet they may have that habitual Preparation, upon which the great stress ought to be laid in this matter, nay, even the conscientious Discharge of their Business is an admirable Qualification for the Sacrament; a Man is serving God when he follows his Calling with Diligence, and observes Justice and Equity in all his Dealings, when he manages the Affairs of the Publick with Fidelity and Honesty, without selling Justice, without Oppression, and without sacrificing the publick to his private Interest. And the greater Dangers and Temptations he is exposed to, the greater need he has of God's Grace and Assistance, which is abundantly communicated in this holy Ordinance. So that the Man of Business who has any serious Thoughts of another World, ought more especially to lay hold on such Opportunities, which may secure the Salvation of his Soul. For as they who have leisure ought to *receive*, as the best Improvement of their Time, so they that are engaged in many worldly Affairs, ought to come to the Sacrament and learn how to sanctifie their Employments.

Q. How

Q. *How ought we to receive the holy Sacrament?*

A. With great *Reverence* and *Devotion*, with particular *Attention* of Mind, accompanying him that administers throughout the whole *Office*, which is admirably framed and composed to express all those pious *Dispositions* and devout *Affections* which well-prepared Minds ought to exercise upon such Occasions: Our *Repentance* in the *Confession* and *Absolution*: Our *Charity* in *relieving* our poor Brethren, in *praying* for all Conditions of Men, and in *forgiving* those that have offended us: Our *Humility* in acknowledging our *Unworthiness*: Our *Resolutions* of better *Obedience*, in *presenting* our selves, a *reasonable, holy* and *lively Sacrifice* unto God: Our *Praises* and *Thanksgivings* in the *Hymns*, and *Devotions* after the Communion. And while others are communicating, we may enlarge our selves upon these Subjects, always taking care that our private *Devotions* give place to those that are publick; and that we lay aside our own *Prayers* when the Minister calls on us to join with him.

Q. *What Care has the Church of England taken to prevent the Prophanation of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper?*

A. Such is the wise *Discipline* of our *Holy Mother*, that both by Her *Rubricks* and *Canons*, she trains us up by gradual Steps to a worthy Participation of this heavenly Banquet. For in our *Baptism* she requires *Sponsors* who shall stipulate for us, and give Security for our *Christian Education* in the *Communion* of the Church; they being engaged not only to instruct us in all the necessary Points of Faith and Practice, but are charged to take care that when we are fit,

Exhor. at
the end of
Pub. Bap-
tism.

we

Can. 59.
60. 61.

Rub. after
the Catech.

Rub. after
Confirm.

Can. 26.
27.

Can. 28.

Rub. be-
fore the H.
Com.

we be brought to the Bishop for Confirmation. And not the Sureties only, but the Parish Priest or Curate is particularly enjoined to catechise, to instruct and examine the Youth and the common People in the Principles of the Christian Religion according to the Church Catechism; and farther requires that none be presented to the Bishop for Confirmation, till they can give an Account and Reason of their Faith; of which the Minister who is to present them is to be the Judge, and not even then to be confirmed, unless the Bishop approves of them. To all this the Church prudently adds this important Rule, that none be admitted to the Holy Communion until such time as they be confirmed, or be ready or desirous to be confirmed; the great Reason whereof is that she may be satisfied that those who promised by their Sureties in Baptism, do renew and confirm that Contract; and that they will evermore endeavour themselves faithfully to observe such things as by their own Confession they have assented unto. And still to preserve the Dignity of the Holy Sacrament, her Ministers are obliged to admit no notorious Offenders, or declared Schismatics to the Participation of it. That this Method may be more effectual, and that no unqualified Person may surreptitiously intrude; Strangers from other Parishes are not to be received to the Holy Communion; and as many as intend to be Partakers of it shall signify their Names to the Curate, at least some time the Day before; that notorious ill Livers may be admonished of their Faults, and give Proofs of their Repentance before they presume to come to the Lord's Table. When Warning is given for the Celebration

tion of the Holy Communion, the whole Congregation are put in mind of their Duty by a patheticall Exhortation. And even in the beginning of the Communion Service the Priest that officiates, lays before the Communicants the Danger of unworthy receiving, and invites only those to approach that have requisite Qualifications; so that if *pious Education*, and *Christian Instruction*, if the *solemn ratifying* our *Baptismal Vow*, and *Conference* with our *Spiritual Guides*, if a particular *Prohibition* of *notorious Offenders*, and the earnest *Exhortations* of our *Pastor*, can secure these *holy Mysteries* from being abused, it must be owned our *Church* has taken sufficient Care to prevent it.

Exhor. before Com.

Exhor. at the Com.

Q. But may not the frequent use of the holy Sacrament diminish that Reverence we ought to have for it?

A. On the contrary 'tis the likeliest Means to increase our Veneration and respect towards it. For tho' Familiarity with the best of Men may be apt to diminish that respect that was paid to them, by reason of those Frailties and Imperfections which are sometimes mixt with very great Vertues, and which are only discovered by a great Intimacy with them; yet the oftner we converse with God in his holy Ordinances, the more we shall admire his divine Perfections, and the more we shall be disposed to conform our selves to his Likeness. For an Object of infinite Perfection in it self, and of infinite Goodness to us, will always raise our Admiration, and heighten our Esteem and Respect the more we contemplate it, it being the Discovery of some Imperfection, where we thought there was none, that abates the Value

lue and Reverence we had for any Object.

Q. What are the great Advantages of frequent Communion?

A. It keeps a lively Sense of Religion upon our Minds, and invigorates our Souls with fresh Strength and Power to perform our Duty. It preserves that intimate Union that ought to be inviolable between Christ and the Members of his mystical Body. It is the proper Nourishment of our Souls, without which we can no more maintain our spiritual Life than we can our temporal without eating and drinking. It raises in us strong Ardours of Love and Consolation, so that it becomes the greatest Torment we can endure to offend God, and our greatest Delight to please him. It is the Sovereign Remedy against all Temptations, by mortifying our Passions, and spiritualizing our Affections; for how can we love any sinful Satisfactions, that crucified the *Lord of Glory*, and fix our Hearts upon perishing Objects, when he only deserves, as he requires, the *whole Man*? It ratifies and confirms to us the Pardon of our Sins, and repairs those Breaches which our Follies have made in our Souls. It fortifies our Minds against all those Afflictions and Calamities which are often the Lot of the Righteous in this miserable World; and administers to us such Comfort and Peace of Conscience, as surpasses all Understanding, and is only to be relisht by those that make the Experiment. 'Tis the most proper Method to make our Bodies Temples of the Holy Ghost, and to fit and prepare our Souls for the eternal Enjoyment of God.

The PRAYERS.

I.

LET thy merciful Ears, O Lord, be open to the Prayers of thy humble Servant, and that I may obtain my Petitions, make me to ask such things as shall please thee, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

ASSIST me mercifully, O Lord, in all my Supplications and Prayers, and dispose the Way of thy Servant towards the Attainment of everlasting Salvation; that among all the Changes and Chances of this mortal Life, I may ever be defended by thy most gracious and ready Help, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

III.

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our Learning; Grant that I may in such wise hear them, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, that I may, by Patience and Comfort of thy holy Word, embrace and ever hold fast the blessed Hope of everlasting Life, which thou hast given me in my Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

IV.

GLORY be to thee, O crucified Love, who at B^r. *Ken*, thy last supper didst ordain the holy Eucharist, the Sacrament and Feast of Love. It was for the continual Remembrance of the Sacrifice of thy Death, O blessed Jesu, and of
K k 2 the

the Benefits we receive thereby, that thou wast pleased to ordain this sacred and awful Rite; all Love, all Glory be to thee. Ah dearest Lord, how little sensible is he of thy Love in dying for us, who can ever forget thee! Woe is me that ever a Sinner should forget his Saviour! and yet alas! how prone we are to do it. Glory be to thee, O gracious Jesu! who to help our Memories and impress thy Love deep in our Souls, hast instituted the blessed Sacrament, and hast commanded us to do this in Remembrance of thee. Let the propitiatory Sacrifice of thy Death, which thou didst offer up on the Cross for the Sins of the whole World, and particularly for my Sins, be ever fresh in my Remembrance. O blessed Saviour, let that mighty Salvation thy Love has wrought for us, never slip out of my Mind, but especially let my Remembrance of thee in the holy Sacrament be always most lively and affecting. O Jesu! if I love thee truly, I shall be sure to frequent thy Altar, that I may often remember all the wonderful Loves of my crucified Redeemer. I know, O my Lord, and my God, that a bare Remembrance of thee is not enough; O do thou, therefore fix in me such a Remembrance of thee, as is suitable to the infinite Love I am to remember; work in me all those holy and heavenly Affections, which become the remembrance of a crucified Saviour; and do thou so dispose my Heart to be thy Guest at thy holy Table, that I may feel all the sweet Influences of Love crucified, the strengthening and refreshing my Soul, as my Body is by the Bread and Wine. O merciful Jesu, let that immortal Food which in the holy Eucharist thou vouchsafest me, instil
into

into my weak and languishing Soul new Supplies of Grace, new Life, new Love, new Vigour and new Resolution, that I may never more faint or droop, or tire in my Duty. *Amen.*
Lord Jesus. *Amen.*

C H A P. X.

Ember Days in December.

Q. *What Fast does the Church observe at this time?*

A. The *fourth* Season of the *Ember Days*; which are the *Wednesday*, *Friday* and *Saturday* after the *thirteenth* of *December*. The *Sunday* following, being one of the stated times to supply the Church with *Pastours* and *Ministers*, who are to feed and govern the Flock of Christ.

Q. *Since the Church is a compleat Society, wherein some govern and others are governed, what is the Duty of all Lay-Christians to their spiritual Governours?*

A. To *honour* and *esteem* them highly for their *Work sake*, to *treat* them with *Respect* and *Reverence*, to *love* them, to *provide* for their *Maintenance*, to *pray* for them and to *obey* them.

Q. *Wherein consists that Honour and Esteem that is due to our spiritual Superiours for their Work sake?*

A. In considering them as those that bear the great Character of *Ambassadors from Christ*, as *2 Cor. 5.20.*

St. Paul calls them; and as Instruments of conveying to us the greatest Blessings we are capable of receiving, because they relate to our eternal Salvation; and consequently regarding them as commissioned by him to that holy Office. So that the Authority they have received to preside over Christians as Governours of the Church, must always be owned to come from God; and this religious regard to their divine Mission must be express in the whole Course of our Conduct towards them.

Q. What is that Respect and Reverence we ought to shew towards them?

A. The expressing by our Words and Actions, all that Honour and Esteem we have for their Character in our Minds; which will oblige us to treat their Persons with great Civility in Conversation, to speak all the good we can of them in their Absence, and to throw a Veil over their real Infirmities, never to make them the Objects of our light Mirth, nor to proclaim their Failings in order to reproach their Persons, because it may tend to disparage and debase their Office. Not to use any scurrilous Words or contemptuous Behaviour towards them, because the Disrespect cast upon them is an Affront to their Master, whose Person they represent; for tho' they may be inferiour to others in some humane accomplishments, yet God has promised particularly to assist them in the faithful Discharge of their holy Calling.

Q. But besides their Character, have not the Clergy many personal Qualifications to challenge from us Respect and Esteem?

A. As long as Piety and Virtue, Learning
and

and *Knowledge* have any Credit and Reputation in the World, and that Men are concern'd that others should be formed to the same valuable Principles, that their Minds should be cultivated and their manners regulated; so long the *Clergy* will have a good Title to the Honour and Esteem of all wise and good Men. The very Method of their Education gives them great Advantages for their Improvement in all sorts of necessary and polite Learning, and raises them above the Level of those with whom they are equal in all other Circumstances; and the Subject of their constant Studies, being matters of Piety and Religion, 'tis reasonable to suppose, they live under more lively and stronger Impressions of another World, than the rest of Mankind; and experience sufficiently convinces us how much the *Nobility* and *Gentry* of the Kingdom are beholding to their care for those Impressions of Piety and Knowledge which are stamp'd upon their Education. In the most ignorant Ages what Learning flourish'd was in their Body, and by their Care was conveyed down to Posterity. In the most dissolute times the greatest Examples of Piety were in their Order, and we have yet remaining eminent Monuments of their Magnificent as well as useful Charity, both to the Bodies and Souls of Men.

Q. But if the Ministers of God do not act suitably to the Dignity of their Character, may we not condemn them?

A. Their Character should certainly defend them from Contempt, and the Relation they have to God should secure them from our ill Usage. And in order to this 'tis necessary to consider, that as there is an inherent Holiness

whereby Mens Actions and Affections are in some measure conformable to the Laws of God, in which Sense good Men in all Ages were esteemed *Holy*; so there is a *relative Holiness*, which consists in some peculiar Relation to God's Service, of which *Things, Times, Places* and *Persons* are capable. In this last Sense the *Tribe of Levi* was called the *holy Tribe*, as those that are dedicated to the Service of Christ under the Gospel are called *God's Ministers*; Mal. 2.6, 8. not that it was always true of them, that *they walked before God in Peace and Equity, and turned many from Iniquity*, for too often they were gone out of the way, and caused many to stumble at the Law; but because they had a particular Relation to God in the performance of that Worship that was paid to him. And Artic. 26. tho' they may be bad Men, yet *the Effect of Christ's Ordinances is not taken away by their Wickedness, nor the Grace of God's Gifts diminished from such who receive the Sacraments rightly, and by Faith, which are effectual by reason of Christ's Institution and Promise, altho' they be ministred by evil Men.* Just as a Pardon pass'd by an Immoral Lord Keeper, or a Sentence pronounced by a wicked Judge, are looked upon as valid to all intents and purposes, because their Efficacy depends not upon the Qualifications of those in Commission, but upon the Sovereign Authority from whence they both receive their Commission. So that the Advantages we receive by their Administrations, and the Relation they have to God should still preserve some Respect for their Persons. And it is doubtless a better Demonstration of Christian Zeal, where we have a thorough Information of their

their scandalous Lives, to make proof of it before their lawful Superiours, that *being found guilty, they may by just Judgment be deposed*, than either by our Words and Actions to affront or contemn them our selves, or to provoke others to do the like.

Q. What is the ill Consequence of despising the Persons, and exposing the Conduct of our Pastors, the Ministers of Christ?

A. It diminishes that Credit and Effect which their spiritual Administrations ought to have upon the Minds of Men, and makes them less capable of doing that good which their Profession obliges them to attempt; for as much as we take from the Opinion of their Piety and Integrity, so much we lessen their Power in promoting the Interest of Religion, whose Fate very much depends upon the Reputation of those who feed and govern the Flock of Christ. And this the Enemies of Religion are very sensible of, who omit no opportunity of exposing their Persons, and representing their sacred Function only as a Trade, whereby they procure an advantageous Subsistence.

Q. But since the Interest of the Clergy is supported by what they plead for, does not this make it reasonable to suspect that all revealed Religion is only Priestcraft?

A. 'Tis very fit that they who quit all other Methods of procuring of Subsistence should live of that *Gospel* they preach; and tho' Men may be swayed by Interest, yet the Truth and Falseness of things no ways depend upon it; and the Measures of Judging concerning them are quite of another Nature. It is sufficient Evidence must convince a Man that is impartial, concerning the
Truth

Truth of what is asserted; and 'tis reasonable to suppose, that they who make it their Business to search into these Matters, should be best acquainted with the grounds of Conviction. And we find that our Value for the *Laws* of the *Land*, and the *Art* of *Physick*, is no ways abated by the great Advantages they make who follow either of those Professions.

Q. Is it reasonable to be prejudiced against Religion upon the account of the bad Lives of some of the Clergy?

A. As long as *Clergy-men* are cloathed with Flesh and Blood as well as other Men, we ought not to be prejudiced against Religion, because some few are overcome by the Follies and Infirmities of Mankind; the many remarkable Instances of Piety and Devotion, of Charity and Sobriety among the *sacred Order*, should rather confirm us in our holy Faith, since they who have had the greatest opportunities to examine the Grounds of Religion, shew forth the Truth and Excellency of it by holy Lives suitable to their Profession.

Q. How may the Clergy best preserve that Honour and Respect that is due to their Character?

A. By discharging the Duties of their Profession with great *Zeal* and *Conscience*; by behaving themselves with *Gravity* and *Sobriety*, with *Meekness* and *Charity*, the solid Ornaments of their holy Function, and the surest Method to raise themselves above the Reproaches of a malicious World; for true Value and Esteem is not to be acquired by the little *Arts* of *Address* and *Insinuation*, much less by *Flattery*, and by complying with Men in their Follies, but by *Steadiness*

B^r Stillingfleet.

ness and *Resolution* in the performance of their Duties, joined with all that *Charity* and *Gentleness* in their Behaviour, which is consistent with being true to their own Obligations.

Q. *Wherein consists that Love we owe to the Ministers of God?*

A. In being ready to *assist* them in all Difficulties, and in *vindicating* their *Reputations* from those *Aspersions* which bad Men are apt to load them with. In *covering* their real *Infirmities*, and interpreting all their Actions in the best Sense; never picking out the Faults of a few, and making them a Reproach to the whole *Sacred Order*.

Q. *Why ought we to provide a Maintenance for the Clergy?*

A. Because they are in a peculiar manner Servants of the great God of Heaven and Earth, to whose Bounty we owe all that we enjoy, and therefore should dedicate a part of what we receive to his immediate Service, as an acknowledgment of his Sovereignty and Dominion over all. And what makes this Duty farther reasonable, is, that in order to be Instruments in God's Hands in procuring our eternal Welfare, they renounce all ordinary means of advancing their Fortunes; they surrender up their Pretensions to the Court and Camp, to the Exchange and the Bar; and therefore 'tis highly fit that their laborious and difficult Employment purely for God's Glory and our Salvation, should receive from us the encouragement of a comfortable and honourable Subsistence.

Q. *Why ought their Maintenance to be Honourable and Plentiful?*

A. That Parents may be encouraged to devote

Ecclef. 9.
16.

vote their Children of good Parts to the *Service* of the *Altar*; for it is not probable they will sacrifice an expenceful Education to an Employment that is attended with small Emoluments. And if some Persons have Zeal enough to engage in the Ministry without a Respect to the Rewards of it, yet common Prudence ought to put us upon such Methods as are most likely to excite Men of the best Parts and Ability to undertake the *sacred Function*; that the best Cause may have the best Management, and the purest Religion the ablest Defendants. It is also necessary that their Maintenance should bear some proportion to the Dignity of their Character, who are *Embassadors for Christ*; and should raise them above the Contempt of those who are too apt to be influenced by outward Appearances. For though *Wisdom is better than Strength, nevertheless*, as Solomon has long since observed, *the poor Man's Wisdom is despised, and his Words are not heard*. And farther, that by this means they may be better enabled not only to provide for their Families, which is a Duty incumbent upon them as well as the rest of Mankind, but to be Examples to their Flock in Charity and in doing Good, as well as in all other manner of Vertue.

Q. *What Maintenance do the Laws of the Land assign to the Clergy?*

A. *First*, the *Manse* or *House* and *Glebe*, which was the original Endowment of the Church, without which it cannot be supplied, and without which it could not be consecrated; and upon which was founded the original Right of a Patronage. *Secondly*, the *Oblations* which were the voluntary Offerings of the Faithful,
very

very considerable in the primitive Times; so that the Necessities of the Church were liberally supplied from the great Bounty of the People; and when upon the spreading of Christianity, a more fix'd and settled Maintenance was required, yet somewhat of the ancient Custom was retained in *voluntary Oblations*. *Thirdly*, Tithes, which are the main legal support of the Parochial Clergy. Their Reason of the Payment is founded on the Law of God, and their Settlement among us hath been by ancient and unquestionable Laws of the Land; so that in the Judgment of the greatest Lawyers, nothing is more clear and evident than the legal Right of *Tithes*.

Q. *Were Tithes paid in the Days of the Apostles and in the primitive Ages of Christianity?*

A. The Zeal of Christians in the times of the Apostles was so great, that as many as were Possessors of Lands or Houses, sold them and laid the price of them at the Apostles feet; and the Devotion of the following Ages, even to the latter end of the fourth Century, was so remarkable for the Liberality of their Offerings and *Oblations*, that their Bounty to the Evangelical Priesthood exceeded what the *Tenth* would have been, if they had paid it; so that there was no reason to demand *Tithes*, when Men gave a greater proportion of what they possessed; tho' even during those Ages, there want not Testimonies from the Fathers of those times, *St. Irenaeus*, *Origen* and *St. Cyprian*, that Tithes were due under the Gospel, as well as before and under the Law; and that they were paid is plain from the *Apostolical Canons*, so called, which provide for the Disposal of them.

Acts 4. 34.

35.

Adv. Hær.

l. 4. c. 34.

Cont. Cel.

l. 8. p. 400.

Unit. Eccl.

n. 23.

Can. 4. 39.

Q. *What*

Q. What Sin are we guilty of, when we defraud the Clergy of their Maintenance?

A. The grievous Sin of Sacrilege, which is then committed, as in other Instances, so in this of taking what is set apart for their Subsistence, when we employ it in other Uses, or to our own particular Profit, or when we are guilty of any fraud in paying what is due to them; which is a robbing of God, as the Prophet informs us;
Mal. 3. 8. Will a Man rob God, yet ye have robbed me; but ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In Tithes and Offerings. To steal then, or alienate that which is sacred, that which is set apart for God's perculiar Service, is called robbing of God; because of such sacred things God is the true Proprietary?

Q. What Examples are there in Scripture of the severe Punishment of Sacrilege?

A. If the Sin of Adam was of this kind, as some think, who ate of that Tree as common which God had reserved to himself as holy; we know how he suffered in himself and Posterity, and that the whole Earth was cursed for his sake.
Josh. 7. 21. Achan for taking a Wedge of Gold and a Babylonish Garment of the devoted thing of Jericho, brought a Curse both upon himself and the
1 Sam. 2. whole Congregation of Israel. Eli's Sons, by robbing God of his Sacrifices to furnish their own Tables, provoked God to give not only his People but the Ark of his Covenant into the Hands of the Philistins. For the Sacrilege of
2 Chro. 36. the sabbatical Year, God caused his People to be
21. carried away captive, and the Land to lie waste seventy Years. And the Vengeance of God
Dan. 5. 2. lighted upon Belshazzar for his Profanation of the Vessels of the Temple. The first Transgression

fion of this kind under the Gospel, was severely punished by present Death, in the Persons of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*; to manifest how heinous *Acts 5. 3,* it was in Christ's sight, and to be a warning for *4. 5.* all those that afterwards should believe in his Name. And what Destruction this grievous Crime has brought upon several Families of the *Nobility* and *Gentry* of this Nation, may be seen in *Sir Henry Spelman's History and Fate of Sacrilege discovered by Examples, &c.*

Q. *Why ought we to pray for the Ministers of God?*

A. Because the great Difficulties and Labours of their holy Employment can never be supported, nor the Hazards and Dangers they are exposed to sufficiently conquered, without the particular Assistance of God's Holy Spirit; and tho' we may be deprived of other Opportunities of doing them any substantial Service, yet 'tis in the Power of the meanest to address to Heaven in their behalf; that they may be defended from the Malice and Ill-Will of bad Men, that they may have the Countenance and Protection of the Great and Powerful, that their zealous Labours in God's Vineyard may be attended with success, and that they may turn many to Righteousness.

Q. *Wherein consists that Obedience we owe to our spiritual Governours?*

A. In observing all their Injunctions that are contain'd within the bounds of their Commission; in submitting to that Discipline they shall inflict, either to recover us from a state of Folly, or to preserve us from falling into it. And all this from a sense of that Right they have to command, intrusted to them by our Saviour Jesus Christ,

Christ, and of that great penalty we are liable to by our Contempt; *for he that despiseth them despiseth him that sent them.* Accordingly Heb. 13. 17. St. Paul charges us to obey them that have the rule over us, and to submit our selves because they watch for our Souls, as they that must give an account.

Q. Is our Obedience only due in such things as they can prove to be the Will of God from exprefs Testimony of Scripture?

A. I think our Obedience to our spiritual Governours, is of a larger Extent; for there is no Man but ought to be obeyed, when he convinces another that what he requires is enjoined by the exprefs Command of God; and if this were all the Obedience that were due to them, they would be obliged as much to obey us as we are to obey them. Since therefore God has in his holy Word given them some spiritual Authority, and a right to exact some Obedience from their Flock, the exercise of it must be about things Indifferent in themselves, not enjoined by the exprefs Word of God, but only no ways contrary to it, no ways forbidden by it. This obliges us to attend their *publick Administrations* at such *Times* and *Places* as they shall appoint, and upon such *Occasions* as they shall judge proper to encrease our Piety and Devotion. To submit to such Regulations as they shall think conducive towards the *edifying the Body of Christ*. The want of this Obedience destroys the Peace of the Church, and insensibly leads us step by step till our refractoriness degenerates into the grievous Sin of *Schism*.

Q. What do you mean by Schism?

A. A causeless Separation from such Governours

nours in the Church, as have received their Authority and Commission from Jesus Christ. If there be a *sufficient Cause*, then there may be a *separation* but no *Schism*. But if there be no sufficient ground for a Separation, 'tis *Schism*, that is, a *culpable Separation*; which was always reckoned a Sin of a very heinous Nature; for St. Paul charges the *Ephesians* to *keep the* Eph. 4.3, *unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace*, because &c. *there was but one God, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, and one Body of Christ*, and tells the *Corinthians*, that *we were all baptized by one* 1 Cor. 12. *Spirit into one Body*. The same Doctrine is 13. taught in the Writings of the first *Fathers* of the Church, particularly of St. *Ignatius* and St. *Cyprian*; and this was reputed a great Sin by them even before the Church and State were united, and when the *Meetings* of the *Schismatics* were as much tolerated by the *State* as the *Assemblies* of the *Catholics*.

Q. Do not the Laws of Toleration in a State alter the damnable Nature of Schism?

A. Such Laws only exempt the Persons of *Schismatics* from any poenal Prosecution, but the evil Nature of *Schism* still continues, and cannot be altered by any humane Laws and Constitutions; because *Schism* is a Transgression of a divine positive Law, which God hath made for the preservation of the Body Politick of the Church, to which *Schism* is as destructive, as *Rebellion* to the State. And according to this principle *Donatism* and *Novatianism* as well as *Arianism* were counted as damnable *Schisms* under the Reigns of those Emperors who granted *Toleration* to them, as under the Reigns of those who made Laws against them.

L I

Q. What

Q. What may we learn from the consideration of those Duties which we owe to the Ministers of Jesus Christ?

A. That the Contempt of the Clergy, generally proceeds from a Contempt of Religion; or when it takes its rise from a more innocent cause, is very apt to lead to it; because a due regard to Religion can never be maintained without a proportionable Respect to the Ministers thereof. That one proper Method to increase our Reward in the next World, is to do all good Offices to those that are dedicated to the Service of the Altar; because he that encourages and enables a Prophet for his Duty, hath an Interest in his Work, and consequently in the Reward that belongs to it. He that receives a Prophet out of respect to his Function, shall receive a Prophet's Reward. That our Zeal to defend the Rights of the Sacred Order ought the more frequently to exert it self, by how much the more the faithful discharge of their Function exposes them to the ill Will and Malice of wicked and unreasonable Men. That there is no better way to maintain the Peace of the Church and edifie the Body of Christ; than by preserving a great deference for our spiritual Governours, and by submitting to their lawful Institutions.

The PRAYERS.

I.

A Almighty God, the Giver of all good Gifts who of thy Divine Providence hast appointed divers Orders in thy Church; Give thy Grace, I humbly beseech thee, to all those who

are to be called to any Office and Administration in the same; and so replenish them with the Truth of thy Doctrine, and endue them with Innocency of Life, that they may faithfully serve before thee, to the Glory of thy great Name, and the Benefit of thy holy Church, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

I Thankfully acknowledge, O God, thy great Goodness, who hast set apart an Order of Men on purpose to guide and govern us, to direct and assist us in matters of the greatest Importance, even our eternal Salvation. Grant that I may always reverence and respect them, because they have a peculiar relation to thee; that I may sincerely love them, because of those great Benefits I receive by their Administrations; that I may readily and chearfully provide for their Maintenance, because the *Lord hath ordained* 1 Cor. 9. 14. *that they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel*, and that he that is *taught in the* Gal. 6. 6. *Word ought to communicate to him that teacheth in all good things*; That I may never rob them of their just Rights by the least Sacrilegious Encroachment, that the fear of *Ananias* and *Sapphira's* Punishment may continually possess my Heart, as it did the Church at first and as many as heard it; that I may earnestly pray for them, because thy divine Assistance is so necessary to crown their Labours with success; for tho' *Paul* planterth, and *Apollos* watereth, 'tis thou, O Lord, 1 Cor. 3. 6. that givest the Increase. And above all make me careful to *obey them that have the Rule over* Heb. 13. 17. *me*, because they watch for my Soul as they that must give an account, that they may do it with

Joy, and not with Grief; that so by a faithful discharge of my Duty to my Spiritual Superiours, I may continue a sound Member of thy Church here upon Earth, and may pass Eternity in the Society of the Church triumphant in Heaven, singing Praises and Hallelujahs to the Blessed and Glorious Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

III.

B^r Taylor.

O Merciful Jesu, who hast promised perpetuity to thy Church and a permanency in defiance of all the Powers of Darknes and the Gates of Hell, and to this purpose hast constituted several Orders, leaving a power to thy Apostles and their Successors the Bishops to beget Fathers of our Souls, and to appoint Priests and Deacons for the Edification of thy Church, the Benefit of all Christian People, and the Advancement of thy Service. Have Mercy upon thy Ministers the Bishops, give them for ever a great measure of thy holy Spirit, and at this time particular Assistance, and a power of discerning and trying the Spirits of them, who come to be ordained to the Ministry of thy Word and Sacraments; That they may lay Hands suddenly on no Man, but maturely, prudently, and piously, may appoint such to thy Service and the Ministry of thy Kingdom, who by Learning, Discretion, and a holy Life, are apt Instruments for the Conversion of Souls, to be Examples to the People, Guides of their Manners, Comforters of their Sorrows, to sustain their Weaknesses, and able to promote all the Interest of true Religion. Grant this, O great Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls, Blessed Jesus, who livest and reignest in the Kingdom

Kingdom of thy eternal Father, one God World without end. *Amen.*

C H A P. XI.

All Fridays in the Year, except Christmas-Day.

W*hat weekly Fast is enjoined in the Church of England?*

A. Every *Friday* throughout the whole Year, except *Christmas-Day* happen to fall upon it, and then the *Fast* gives way to the *Festival*, and it is celebrated as a Day of rejoicing.

Q. Why was *Friday* pitched upon for this weekly Fast?

A. In compliance with the Custom of the *Primitive Church*, which always, observed this Day as a *Fast* in commemoration of our Saviour's Sufferings, who was crucified on this Day of the Week; and what Day so proper to humble our selves, as that on which the Blessed Jesus humbled himself even to the death upon the Cross for us miserable Sinners? It was one of their *stationary Days*, so call'd, as *Tertullian* observes, from an allusion to the *military Stations* and *Tertul. de* keeping their Guards. They usually forbore eat- *jejun. c. 2.* ing till three a Clock in the Afternoon, till which time their publick Assemblies lasted.

Q. How ought we to observe this Day?

A. Not only to abridge our selves as to the Pleasures of eating and drinking, but to retire as much as we can conveniently from our worldly Affairs, in order to humble our selves in the fight

Can. 15. of God, *to resort to Church at the accustomed Hours of Prayer*; and particularly to employ some part of the Day in the *examination* of our selves and in the serious review of our own Lives. The frequent performance of which is one of the best means to improve our selves in all manner of Vertue.

Q. *What do you mean by the Examination of our selves?*

A. The calling our selves to a strict account for all the Actions of our Lives; comparing them with the Laws of God, the Rule and Measure of our Duty; considering impartially how much Evil we have been guilty of, and how little Good we have done, in comparison of what we might and ought to have done; in short, to search out our Sins of *Omission* as well as *Commission*.

Q. *What are Sins of Commission?*

A. The doing such things as the Law of God forbids; which are called *negative Precepts*, and are of perpetual Obligation, because no Circumstances can make them lawful. These are easily discovered because they are apt to terrifie the Conscience, and to make us apprehensive of the Wrath of God, and the wilful and deliberate practice of any one of these, makes a Man a Transgressor of the whole Law; because this is not consistent with that Integrity of Mind and sincere regard to God and his Laws which every good Christian ought to have; and is therefore consequently a forfeiture of God's Favour, which can no more be expected when we wilfully persist in the practice of any one known Sin, than if we were guilty of all.

Q. *What do you mean by Sins of Omission?*

A. The neglecting to do such things as God commands;

commands ; which are called *affirmative Precepts*, and do not perpetually oblige, because Circumstances may make them not to be Duties at some certain times ; tho' when the nature of them is such, that no Circumstances can alter the Obligation of them, they bind as much as negative Precepts; as the Commands of *Repentance* and *loving of God* : These Sins are not so apt to startle the Mind, because Men easier find salvo's to allay the sense of the Guilt of them, than for their Sins of Commission; tho' to awaken Men to Consideration, our Saviour has declared that the Enquiry at the great Day will run chiefly upon the neglects of our Duty ; and therefore we ought to examine our selves whether we have frequent and serious Thoughts of God, whether we maintain in our Minds firm Purposes and Resolutions of obeying him, whether we constantly perform the Duties of divine Worship, and whether we serve him with Diligence and Devotion ; whether we discharge faithfully the Duties of that Station we are placed in, both in reference to the publick and our own private Families, and whether we are active and zealous in doing all the good we can to the Bodies and Souls of Men ; in short, whether we are as ready to serve God as our own Pleasures, and whether we have the same regard to his Worship, as we have to any other thing we love and esteem.

Q. *When may we be said to transgress by our Thoughts?*

A. When they are employed about the contriving and compassing any forbidden thing ; for *he that deviseth to do Evil, shall be called* Prov. 24. 8. *a mischievous Person.* When they transgress those

those particular *Laws* that they are subject to; of which sort are dishonourable Opinions and Notions of God, undervaluing Thoughts and groundless Suspicions of our Neighbour, proud and arrogant Conceits of our own Worth; because *pious Opinions* of God, *charitable* ones of Men, and *humble* and lowly Conceits of our selves, are *Duties* incumbent upon our very Minds. But as for all other irregular Thoughts, which spring up in our Minds, and are but little in our power, they are neither Sins nor matter of Punishment any farther than they are Causes or Principles of a sinful Choice. For according as we assent or dissent to those Motions that are in our Minds, so will our Thoughts have the Notion of Vertuous or sinful Thoughts.

Q. What is the End and Design of Examining our selves?

A. That we may understaud the true state and condition of our Souls; and that our Repentance may be full and compleat, and extend to all those particulars wherein we have transgressed the Laws of God; for till we discover all our Follies and Infirmities, we can neither watch against them nor amend them. Besides, this is the most effectual method to keep our Consciences continually waking and tender and afraid to offend.

Q. Did any of the Philosophers prescribe this method to their Followers?

A. Pythagoras in the *Golden Verses* which go under his Name particularly recommends this practice to his Scholars. Every Night before they slept he enjoins them thrice to recollect every single Action of the Day. Wherein have I transgressed? What have I done? What Duty have I omitted? Run over these things, saith he,

he, beginning from the first, and then if you have done Evil be troubled, if Good rejoice. This Course, if daily followed, as is suggested by Hierocles, his excellent Commentator, *per-* Hier. in Carm. Pythag. *fects the divine Image in them that use it, leading them by Additions and Substractions to the beauty of Vertue, and all attainable Perfection.* Plutarch, Epictetus, Seneca, and particularly the Emperor Marcus Antoninus, agree in recommending the same Practice.

Q. Wherein consists the Wisdom of this Practice?

A. In that the Seeds of Vice are hereby hindered from taking any deep Root in our Hearts; and tho' we may be overcome by Surprise or the Strength of Temptation, yet if we continue in this Course, evil Habits will never be able to prevail upon us, or to strengthen and fortifie themselves. By this means our Repentance may in some measure keep pace with our Errors and Failings, and we may prevent the insupportable weight of the Sins of a whole Life falling upon us all at once, when it may be we shall neither have Understanding nor Leisure to recollect our selves, much less to exercise any fit and proper Act of Repentance.

Q. How frequently ought we to examine our selves?

A. It is very adviseable that we should call our selves to an Account every Evening; for this Method frequently repeated, makes the Work both short and easie, and we shall quickly find the great Advantage of it; for having a lively sense of the Faults we commit, the succeeding Day may learn to grow wise, and we may immediately stand upon our Guard, that the same Faults

Faults may not surprife us; and knowing before hand the Account we muft give at Night, it may restrain us from indulging any thing contrary to our Duty, either in Thought, Word, or Deed. If we defer this Examination longer than once a Week, it may prove injurious to us; for by Delay we make the Work more difficult to be performed, and may poffibly forget things of importance to us.

Q. What ought we chiefly to regard in the Examination of our felves?

A. We ought chiefly to confider the Sin that doth moft eafily befet us, the weakeft part of our Minds by Nature and Custom made leaft defenfible; for the Devil, like a skilful General, will attack us, where we lie moft expofed, hoping by gaining that Poft to make the Town quickly furrender. Therefore in furveying the ftate of our Minds, we fhould have an Eye to thofe places that will leaft bear an Affault, thofe Appetites or Paffions that moft frequently occafion our Fall.

Q. Why ought this to be the main Subject of our Examination?

A. Becaufe 'tis reasonable we fhould fecure our felves from our greateft Danger, which is that that threatens us from this Quarter; for when we have once vanquifhed our ftrongeft and moft terrible Enemy, who gives us the greateft Difurbance, the reft that remain will more eafily be overcome by a Mind rais'd with fo noble a Victory.

Q. What Questions are proper to put to our felves every Evening?

A. How we have fpent the whole Day? What Sin we have committed? What Duty we have omitted? Whether we performed our
Morning

Morning Devotions, and how? Where other Opportunities of serving God have offered themselves, how we have behaved our selves in relation to them? If we have conversed, whether with Candour and Affability? Whether we have kept at a distance from Slander and Evil-speaking, the Bane of Society? If we have had Leisure from Business, how we have improved our Time? If we have been engaged in Affairs, with what Honesty and Fidelity we have discharged them? If we have diverted our selves, whether innocently, and within the Bounds of Christian Moderation? What Mercies we have received, and how thankful we have been for them? What Temptations we have resisted? What Ground we have got of the Sin which doth so easily beset us? How we have governed our Passions in the little Accidents that daily happen to provoke us? What Opportunities we have had of doing good, and how we have used them? What Opportunities we have had of discouraging Evil, and how we have opposed it? Now by recollecting the whole time from our rising till our going to Bed, to which purpose a very few Minutes before our Evening Devotions will suffice, we shall very easily be enabled to answer the preceding Questions; so that we may heartily beg God's Pardon for those Sins we have been guilty of, and shew our selves thankful for those Blessings he has bestowed upon us.

Q. What Considerations are proper to excite us to a thorough Examination of our selves?

A. These two especially. That when we are searching into the State of our Minds, we are in the Presence of God, to whom our most
secret

secret Thoughts are open and naked ; and therefore we should be impartial, and bring our most private Actions to the Test of his Laws ; for tho' we may impose upon our selves, nothing can be hid from his *Omniscience*. And that we shall shortly appear before the dreadful Tribunal of God to be tryed for all that we have done in the Body ; and nothing will better prepare us to escape the Terrours of that approaching Tryal, than frequent calling our selves to an account, and thereby making our Peace with God, and reconciling our selves to him by a sincere Repentance ; for if we judge our selves the Sentence of Condemnation will not pass upon us.

Q. How ought this Examination to be performed, when we set a longer time apart for this very purpose ?

A. First, We should beg God's Assistance in the discovery of our own Vileness, that no Partiality may conceal from us the Sight and Sense of our Sins. *Secondly,* We should try our selves by some Heads of Examination, such as are collected together in the *whole Duty of Man*, or such as I have added at the end of this Treatise out of the *Measures of Christian Obedience* ; and where we find our selves guilty, to write down the Instances of our Crimes. *Thirdly,* We should consider the several Aggravations of our Follies ; whether committed against the Light of our Minds ; with the free Consent of our Wills ; and in despite of the Checks of our own Conscience ? whether they have been often repeated ? whether transient Acts or settled Habits ? *Fourthly,* We ought to observe all those previous Steps that have made us transgress, and which have been the fatal Occasions of betraying our Vertue and corrupting our Innocence.

Q. What

Q. What ought to follow this Examination of our selves?

A. Humble Confession of our Sins to God. Hearty Sorrow for having offended him. Earnest Supplications for Pardon thro' the Merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ; with firm Purposes and effectual Resolutions of better Obedience for the time to come; and of keeping at a distance from those Occasions that have betrayed us. Where we have been preserved from Guilt, we must give Glory to God, and thankfully acknowledge that Grace that has restrained us from Evil. If our Sins have been not only against God, but against our Neighbour, we must make him Satisfaction. We must restore whatever we have unjustly taken from him, by Fraud or Force, we must vindicate his Reputation, if we have blemish'd it by Calumny and Evil-speaking; we must endeavour his Recovery, by making him sensible of such Sins and dangerous Errors as we have drawn him into; that he may be put into a way of Pardon. And we must from our Hearts forgive those that have injured us, if we expect Forgiveness from God.

Q. What are the great Advantages of frequent Examination?

A. It makes us thoroughly acquainted with our selves, a Knowledge which is of the greatest Importance to us. It prompts us to *Repentance*, as the only Cure for that Guilt which oppresses our Minds. It disposes us to *Humility* from a lively Sense of our frequent Errors and Mis-carriages. It keeps our Accounts clear and even; and consequently contributes very much to make Death easie and comfortable to us; for how can
that

that surprise us, when we are ready and prepared to give up our Accounts. It is an admirable means to advance us towards Christian Perfection, by making us careful to avoid those Faults for the future, which we have discovered in our former Conduct.

The P R A Y E R S.

I.

Almighty God, who hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a Sacrifice for Sin, and also an Ensamble of Godly Life; Give me Grace, that I may always most thankfully receive this his inestimable Benefit, and also daily endeavour my self to follow the blessed Steps of his most holy Life, thro' the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

II.

Lord of all Power and Might, who art the Author and Giver of all good things; Graft in my Heart the Love of thy Name, increase in me true Religion, nourish me with all Goodness, and of thy great Mercy keep me in the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

III.

Almighty God, the great Searcher of Hearts, who knowest all our secret Thoughts, nothing being hid from thine All-seeing Eye. Dispose me frequently to examine the State of my own Mind, to compare my Actions with the Rule of thy Laws, that nothing contrary to thy
holy

holy Will, may ever find a settled Abode in my Soul ; but let me so consider my ways, as to turn my Feet unto thy Testimonies: Grant that I may so impartially judge and condemn my self, that I may not be condemned at thy dreadful Tribunal. Let not Self-love impose upon me in a Matter of such vast Consequence. Let not Sloth and Negligence deter me from keeping my Accounts clear. Let no darling Passion be so far indulged, as to escape the Scrutiny of serious Examination. And when, O Lord, I have discovered my own Vileness ; Grant that by the Assistance of thy Grace, I may humble my self under the Sight and Sense of it ; that I may from my Heart condemn all those Follies whereby I have provoked thy Wrath and Indignation against me, that I may earnestly solicit thy Pardon and Forgiveness thro' the Merits of Christ the Son of thy Love; that I may be careful to stand upon my Guard for the future, and by Prayer and Watchfulness engage thy powerful Protection, which is so necessary to support me in the Hour of Temptation, and the Day of Trial. Grant this, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ, my only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

*The Prayers for Good Friday may properly
be used on every Friday.*

A particular Enumeration of Sins, whether against God, our Neighbour, or our selves : Taken out of the Measures of Christian Obedience, which are all there explained in the second Book.

Sins against our selves, are *Pride*, *i.e.* too high a Conceit of our selves, and Contempt of others: *Arrogance*, *i.e.* assuming too much to our selves, in setting off our own Praise: *Vain Glory*, *i.e.* Intemperate Affectation of the Praise of others: *Ambition*, *i.e.* a restless Pursuit of Honour and great Places: *Haughtiness*, in contemptuous scornful Carriage: *Imperiousness*, *i.e.* a Lordly way of Behaviour, in commanding Men no way subject to us: *Worldliness*, *i.e.* an over-eager care of worldly things: *Gluttony*; *Voluptuousness*; *Drunkennes*; *Revelling*; *Incontinence*; *Lasciviousness*; *filthy or obscene Jestings*; *Uncleanness*; *Sodomy*; *Effeminateness*; *Adultery*; *Fornication*; *Incest*; *Rape*; *Covetousness*, *i.e.* unsatisfiedness with our own, and an impatient desire of more, or of what belongs to others: *Refusing the Cross*, *i.e.* deserting a Duty to avoid it: *Idleness*, *Sensuality*, *i.e.* an industrious Care to gratifie our bodily Senses: *Carnality*, *i.e.* Subjection to our fleshly Lusts and Appetites.

Sins against God, are *Atheism*; *denying Providence*; *Blasphemy*; *Superstition*; *Idolatry*; *Witchcraft*; *Foolishness*, or gross Ignorance of
our

our Duty; *Unbelief*; *hating God*; *want of Zeal*; *distrusting him*; *not praying to him*; *Unthankfulness*; *Discontent in our present Condition*; or *repining at his Ordering*; *Fearlessness*, or *venturing on any thing, tho' we know it will offend him*; *Common-swearing*; *Perjury*; *Prophaneness*; *Disobedience*.

Sins against our Brethren at large, where are Sins of,

Injustice; as *Murther*; *False-witness*; *Slander*; *i. e.* defaming them with false things: *Lying*; *Unscrupulousness*, or *breach of Promise*; *Theft*; *Oppression, i. e.* wronging one that cannot cope with us in *Contention*; *Extortion*, or *depressing in bargaining*; *Circumvention*, or *going beyond our Brethren*.

Uncharitableness; as *Wickedness, i. e.* a Delight in doing *Mischief*, and making work for others; *despising and hating them that are good*; *giving Scandal to weak Brethren, i. e.* laying in their way an occasion of Sin; *Envy*; *rejoycing in Evil*; *Uncharitableness in Alms*; *suffering false Stains to stick upon others*, when 'tis in our power to vindicate them; *Evil-speaking*, or *divulging any Ill we hear or know by them*; *Censoriousness, i. e.* a Proneness to blame and condemn them: *Backbiting*; *whispering*; *railing*; *upbraiding them with our Kindness*; *reproaching them with their own Faults*; *mocking them for their Infirmities*; *difficulty of Access*; *asfronting them*; *Uncourteousness*; *Uncondescension*; *Unhospitableness towards Strangers*; *Surlinefs*; *Malignity*, or *putting the worst Sense on what is said on done by others*: *Unquietness*; *Unthankfulness*; *Anger*; *Variance*; *Bitterness*; *Clamour*; *Hatred and Malice*; *Implacableness*,

or difficulty in being appeased after any Offences: *Revenge*, or returning ill for ill: *Cursing Enemies*; *Hastiness* and *Rigour* in exacting Punishments.

Discord; as *Unpeaceableness*, *Emulation*, or provoking one another: *Pragmaticalness*, or being *Busy-bodies*: *Tale-bearing*; *not satisfying for Injuries*; *Contentiousness*; *Division* and *Faction*; *Herésie*; *Schism*; *Tumult*.

Sins against our Brethren in particular Relations.

Sins against Sovereign Princes; as *Dishonour*; *Irreverence*; *speaking evil of Dignities*; *refusing Tribute* and *Taxes*; *Traiterousness*; *neglecting to pray for them*; *Disobedience* to them; *Resistance* and *Rebellion*.

Sins against Bishops and Ministers; as *Dishonour* of them, especially for their Works sake: *Irreverence*; *not providing for them*: *Sacrilege*, or taking away either by Force or Fraud those just Dues, which were given to God for their support: *Not praying for them*; *Disobedience*.

Sins of married Persons; as *Unconcernedness* in each others Condition; *not bearing each others Infirmities*; *provoking each other*; *Estrangedness*; *Unfaithfulness to the Bed*; *publishing each others Faults*; *not praying for each other*; *Jealousie*: Of the Husband against the Wife; as *not maintaining her* with convenient Supplies; *not protecting her* from outward Annoyances; *Imperiousness*, or a harsh and magisterial Exercise of Commands; *Uncompliance* with her reasonable Desires, and *Uncondescension* to her pitiable Weakness: Of the Wife against the Husband; as *Dishonour* in inward Esteem and Opinions; *Irreverence* in outward Carriage;
Un-

Unobservance, in not forecasting to do what may please him; *Disobedience* to his just Commands; *casting off his Yoke*, or *Unsubjection*.

Sins of Parents and Children: As *want of natural Affection*; *not praying for each other*; *Imprecation*. Of the *Parents* against the *Children*: As *not providing for them*; *Irreligious and Evil Education*; *provoking them to Anger* by imperious harshness and needless severity in governing. Of the *Children* against the *Parents*: As *Dishonour* in their Minds; *Irreverence* in their Behaviour; *being ashamed of them*; *mocking them*; *speaking Evil of them*; *stealing from them*; *Disobedience* to their lawful Commands; *Contumacy*, or *casting off Subjection* to them. *Sins of Brothers and Sisters*: As *want of natural Affection*; *not providing for our Brethren*; *not praying for them*; *praying against them*.

Sins of Masters against their Servants: As *not maintaining them*; *not catechizing or instructing them*; *unequal Government*, or *Injustice* shewn in requiring unlawful; *Wantonness* in requiring superfluous; and *Rigour* in requiring unmerciful things of them: *Immoderate Threatning*; *Imperiousness*, or contemptuous, haughty Treating of them; *defrauding or keeping back the Wages of the Hireling*. Of *Servants* against their *Masters*; as *Dishonour*; *Irreverence*; *publishing or aggravating their Masters Faults*; *not clearing*, when they can, his *injured Reputation*; *Unfaithfulness* in what he intrusts with them, shewn either by their *Wastfulness*, i. e. spending it for their Pleasure; or *Parloining*, i. e. diverting it to their own Profit

and secret Enrichment : *Disobedience, Non-observance ; answering again ; Slothfulness ; Eye-service ; Resistance ; not praying for him ; praying against him.*

To all which, add these other Sins, which are peculiarly so among Christians, *viz. the neglect of Baptism, and absenting from the Lord's Supper ; and want of Faith in Christ as our Mediator.*



A N

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